

THE CAPE AND ITS STORY



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"On came the Zulus to eat up the 'red soldiers' at Rorke's Drift."

The Cape and its Story



GENERAL SIR GEORGE WHITE, V.C.

THOMAS NELSON AND SONS

THE CAPE AND ITS STORY

OR

The Struggle for South Africa

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"BREAKING THE RECORD," "IN LIONLAND,"

"ACROSS GREENLAND'S ICE-FIELDS,"

ETC., ETC.

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THOMAS NELSON AND SONS

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THE STRUGGLE FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRST SETTLEMENT.

THE closing years of the fifteenth century found the Portuguese in a state of restless activity. The energetic spirit of Prince Henry the Navigator had worked upon the minds of his countrymen, until they rose superior to the fears which for so many hundred years had prevented European seamen from venturing far from land; and in 1496 Bartholomew Diaz, with two small ships manned by daring sailors, left Portugal in the hope of discovering a sea route to India. Day after day, week after week, they sailed southward, valiantly braving the terrors with which popular superstition had invested the unknown ocean and the equally unknown land which was carefully kept in sight on the port side of the ship, until at last the voyagers came to a convenient bay some distance to the south of the tropics. Here Diaz decided to anchor; and he gave the name of Angra Pequena—

that is, little bay—to the spot where, for the first time, white men landed in South Africa.

The neighbourhood was dreary and uninviting—neither man nor beast was to be seen; and having erected a cross on a point overlooking the sea, Diaz continued his voyage. Very soon, however, a terrific gale drove him far to the southward; and when at last the storm abated, no sign of land was visible. With the view of finding the coast, Diaz then steered eastward; but as he still failed to discover land, he again altered his course, and turning northward, sighted land somewhere to the east of the southern point of Africa, now known as Cape Agulhas. He found that the coast, instead of continuing to run southwards, trended to the north-east, and realized that he had at last reached the southern limit of the African continent. The appearance of the country, too, was cheering, for instead of the dreary, sandy wastes which surrounded Angra Pequena, Diaz saw vast stretches of grass-land, on which large herds of cattle were pastured. Men and women were also seen, but no sooner did they catch sight of the ships than the wonderful apparition so much alarmed them that they drove off their cattle into the interior.

Finding it impossible to get into communication with them, Diaz pushed on to Algoa Bay, where he landed on a small islet, erected another cross, and replenished his supply of fresh water. By this time the ships had been some months at sea, and had traversed waters which had never before been cut by a European keel. The men lost heart; they were weary of the voyage; and seeing no sign of its reaching any conclusion, they objected to go farther. Of course no

one knew how near or how far India might be, and Diaz persuaded his men to go on for two days longer; but at the end of that time their spirit failed completely, and they insisted on turning homeward. Again they coasted along the African shore, and though this time they were not blown far out of their course, they encountered such stormy weather that when they rounded a bold, rocky headland which they had not seen on their outward voyage, Diaz named the point the Cape of all the Storms.

At length the explorers reached Portugal, and Diaz recounted his adventures to King John the Second, who then and there declared that the Cape of all the Storms should thenceforward be called the Cape of Good Hope, because he felt sure that Diaz had found the long-desired route to India. Ten years passed, however, before any further attempt was made to round the southern point of Africa; but in the meantime two Portuguese officers were sent by way of the Mediterranean to Cairo, whence they proceeded to Aden, where one of them embarked in a ship bound for Calcutta. From that port he made his way to Sofala, on the east coast of Africa, and having learnt from the natives that some distance inland rich gold mines existed, he sent word to King John that India could certainly be reached by the new route, and mentioned incidentally that Sofala might be a profitable port of call.

Nothing remained but to make the voyage, and in 1497 Vasco da Gama sailed from Lisbon, and following the course taken by Diaz, in time reached an inlet, which he called St. Helena Bay. It lay some distance to the southward of Angra Pequena, and was much

less dreary, for the surrounding neighbourhood was inhabited; and when Da Gama landed he induced the natives to open communication with him. By way of showing that his intentions were good, he gave them various presents; but peace was not of long duration, for some difference of opinion between the Portuguese and the natives led to a fight, in which Da Gama and several men were wounded. After this they decided to push on, and a few days later rounded the Cape of Good Hope without encountering any storms. Taking advantage of the fine weather, they went on to Mossel Bay, where they again cast anchor and prepared to land. More natives were seen, and it soon became evident that they were interested rather than alarmed by the ships; they were willing to accept any number of presents, and supplied Da Gama with a number of sheep, though they could not be induced to sell any cattle.

Having obtained a stock of fresh provisions, the explorers continued their voyage up the coast, and on Christmas Day reached a particularly beautiful tract of land, to which, in honour of the occasion, Gama gave the name of Terra Natalis, or, as it is now more concisely styled, Natal. Still pushing onwards, they skirted the coast until they reached the mouth of the Zambezi, and then striking eastward, they successfully crossed the Indian Ocean.

At last the long-desired sea route to the East was opened up, and Portuguese ships sailed year after year round the Cape to India. The voyage, however, was a terribly long one, and in those days of salt provisions and ill-found vessels the crews suffered severely from scurvy and other diseases. It was nothing unusual for

one-third of a ship's company to die, and another third to be in a helpless condition, long before India was reached; and the voyage would have been impossible without the fresh water and meat obtained on the African coast. Ships touched sometimes at one place, sometimes at another; and in 1503 Antonio de Saldanha entered a bay a few miles to the northward of the Cape of Good Hope. It was commanded by a huge flat-topped rock, more than 3,000 feet high, which, when the clouds came down upon it, bore such a curious resemblance to a table covered with a cloth that Saldanha named it Table Mountain. A pleasant valley lay at one side; but though Saldanha climbed Table Mountain, he made no attempt to investigate the interior of the country. The undertaking probably offered too many difficulties to be lightly attempted, for at a short distance from the coast the land rose in a series of rugged mountains, which at first sight looked anything but encouraging. The absence of navigable rivers precluded any possibility of reaching the interior by boat, and all the early explorers strictly confined themselves to the coast.

For several years things went on quietly; ships called here and there for water or to trade with the natives, with whom there were no collisions, until, in 1510, a boat's crew landed at Table Bay, and for some reason fell out with the natives who came down to trade with them. The sailors got the worst of the encounter, and hurrying back to their ship they told their tale to Francisco d'Almeida, the officer in command. He naturally took their part, and the next morning an armed force, a hundred and fifty strong, was landed to chastise the natives. A number of

cattle were seized, but as they were being driven off the owners fell upon the sailors so furiously that again the Portuguese were beaten. No less than sixty-five men, including D'Almeida, were killed, and the rest fled panic-stricken to the boats, so hotly pursued by the natives that even of those who managed to make their escape very few were unwounded. The repulse disgusted the Portuguese; they took an exaggerated view of the ferocity of the people; and though ship after ship made the voyage to India, very few captains ventured to send men ashore until they reached the neighbourhood of Sofala.

The coast, certainly, was mapped fairly correctly; most of the openings and headlands were named; and the seaboard between Delagoa Bay and the mouth of the Zambezi River became well known. The country to the southward, however, was severely left alone, and for many years no one—Portuguese, Dutch, English, or French—took the slightest interest in South Africa. This indifference continued until 1591, but in that year three English ships bound for India entered Table Bay, in the hope of obtaining fresh provisions. The place made a favourable impression on Captain Lancaster, who was in charge of one of the ships; and ten years later, when he commanded the first fleet which the English East India Company sent to India, he again touched at Table Bay. His second visit was as successful as the first, and for some time all the Company's vessels stopped at Table Bay on their way to the East.

As long as the bulk of the East India trade was in the hands of the Portuguese, the Cape of Good Hope was considered of little importance. But towards the

end of the sixteenth century the Spaniards took possession of Portugal, and refused to allow any Dutch vessels to enter the port of Lisbon, which, up to that time, had served as a depot for Indian goods. The Dutch consequently found it necessary to begin trading with the East on their own account, and in 1595 the first eastward bound Dutch fleet called at Mossel Bay to take in water. Seven years later the Dutch East India Company was formed, and empowered to build forts, enlist troops, appoint officers, and make its own treaties with Indian princes. In fact, subject to the supreme authority of the States-General of Holland, the powers of the Company were almost unlimited, and its profits soon became immense.

The English East India Company was also busy, and after a few years it was suggested that for the convenience of ships on the voyage to and from India a joint fort and refreshing station should be established somewhere in South Africa. With this end in view both companies directed their officers to inspect the coast, and in 1620 two English captains named Shillinge and Fitzherbert hoisted the British flag on the shore of Table Bay, and took possession of the country in the name of King James the First. Neither Company, however, took any active steps for the establishment of a station; but as ships continued to call, a primitive postal system was inaugurated. The plan was a very simple one, for the letters were buried in some convenient spot, the whereabouts of which was notified on a conspicuous stone for the benefit of all whom it might concern.

Things remained at a standstill until 1648, when the ship *Haarlem*, which had put into Table Bay for water,

was driven ashore in a gale, and became a total wreck. Her crew managed to reach land, and to save most of the stores and cargo, which included a variety of garden seeds. These were planted on the banks of a stream which watered Table Valley, huts were built, and the men made themselves as comfortable as circumstances would permit. It was not long before a good crop of vegetables sprang up, and as the climate was pleasant, and the natives brought in a plentiful supply of meat, the castaways found their quarters far from disagreeable.

After six months' stay they were taken home by a passing vessel, but two of the officers were so well pleased with the new country that they drew up a memorial setting forth the desirability of founding a permanent station at the Cape. Their scheme pleased the Company, and at the end of 1651 Surgeon Jan Van Riebeeck sailed with three ships from the Texel, to establish a fort on the shore of Table Bay.

It was not expected that any opposition would be offered by the natives, for at that time South Africa was very thinly peopled, the only inhabitants being two wandering tribes, called by the Europeans Bushmen and Hottentots. The Bushmen, who seem to have been the aboriginal race, were dwarfs in size, loose-skinned, with yellowish brown complexions, abnormally ugly faces, and scanty hair which grew in isolated tufts. They wore little or no clothing, and neither kept cattle nor cultivated the land, but picked up a living anyhow, greedily devouring carrion when nothing better was at hand. The Hottentots, though almost equally ugly and lazy, stood a little higher in

the scale; they owned flocks and herds, and when brought under civilizing influence showed themselves capable of improvement.

Farther to the north, however, the Kafir tribes, a branch of the great Bantu race, were steadily working their way down from their original location in Central Africa. The Kafirs were fine-looking, brown-skinned people, brave, warlike, and at the same time far more civilized than the wandering southern tribes on whose territory they were slowly but surely encroaching. With them, however, the earliest Dutch settlers had nothing to do; they were still a long distance from the Cape, and many years passed before the two races came in contact.

Van Riebeeck landed in Table Bay in April 1652. The Hottentots who inhabited the locality made no attempt to oppose him, and his men set to work to construct a fortified camp, consisting of a few wooden huts enclosed by earthworks. Unfortunately, they arrived nearly at the end of the African summer; the ground was dry and parched, the vegetation was burnt up, and it was obvious that to plant seeds would be useless. The long voyage had already prepared the way for an outbreak of scurvy, and the disease took a strong hold upon the little band.

Towards the end of May the drought came to an end, and with the beginning of the rain a luxuriant vegetation sprang up. Seeds were planted, and while they were germinating the settlers found a number of edible native roots and herbs, which soon restored the scurvy-stricken patients to health. But while the rains thus brought relief in one way, the dampness of the badly-constructed huts caused a serious epidemic

of dysentery, and by the beginning of June about half the men were disabled. Those who were in a condition to work, however, laboured vigorously to improve the dwellings; and with better food and shelter the sick soon began to recover.

Meanwhile the settlers made friends with some of the Hottentots, whose chief, as his proper name was unpronounceable, for greater convenience was generally called Harry. Having once made a voyage in an English ship, he had learned a little English; and when another Hottentot tribe brought their cattle to graze on the rich pasturage which covered the Cape peninsula after the rains, Harry was employed as interpreter. With his assistance trade was established, and though the Europeans and the natives were mutually suspicious of each other, as all traffic was personally superintended by Van Riebeeck, business went on peaceably, and disputes were avoided.

The result of the trade was satisfactory to all concerned. A number of sheep and cattle were purchased at absurdly low prices, but the natives were so well pleased with their bargain that they begged the Dutch to join them in a war against another tribe. Van Riebeeck, however, declined to take any part in the quarrel, since, as he said, his business in Africa was to trade peacefully with all the tribes. Accordingly the Hottentots, having disposed of as many sheep and cattle as they wished to sell, went off to settle their quarrel on their own account; and Van Riebeeck and his people applied their energies to gardening, improving their own dwellings, and constructing a large weather-proof hospital, where sick men from passing vessels could be accommodated.

By the time the rainy season again came round all the people were lodged in fairly comfortable houses ; and as they had plenty of fresh meat and vegetables, no further outbreak of illness occurred. The supply of meat seemed, indeed, to be inexhaustible, for more Hottentots came to trade with the settlers, whose chief difficulty at this time was caused by the lions and leopards that roamed over the Cape peninsula. On one occasion Van Riebeek noted in his diary that the lions seemed disposed to storm the fort, in order to obtain the sheep in the folds within the earthworks, and it became necessary to post sentries every night to guard the cattle-pens.

Otherwise for about eighteen months all went on peacefully, and then Harry and his companions suddenly developed an aggressive spirit. Perhaps the sight of so many sheep and cattle was too much for their honesty, for one Sunday, while the white men were at church, the Hottentots murdered a boy who was looking after the cattle, and drove off his charges so quickly that, though the outraged owners followed in hot pursuit, they only succeeded in recovering one cow. This unprovoked attack naturally caused a good deal of hot feeling. All the draught oxen were among the stolen cattle, and the extra work which their absence imposed did not tend to soothe the feelings of the men. Had the Hottentots ventured near the fort, no doubt they would have been severely punished ; but they kept at a distance until the Dutch had had time to cool down. Then they returned and expressed their regret for what had occurred, though each man declared that he individually had had nothing to do with the robbery. Van Riebeek, of course, could not prove any one guilty, so

he accepted the excuses, and by degrees the little yellow men were allowed to resume their former humble occupations of collecting firewood, carrying water, and performing various odd jobs about the settlement.

Matters had now reached such a stage that a few hands could be spared from necessary work; and as Van Riebeeck wished to explore the locality, he sent out several parties to investigate the neighbourhood of the fort. The rocky, mountainous nature of the country, however, prevented him from accomplishing much in this direction, and Saldanha Bay and the Paarl Valley were the most distant spots reached by the explorers.

Meanwhile, the settlement was decidedly prospering. All sorts of European trees and plants had been introduced; most of the ordinary garden vegetables then in common use flourished in their new home; vines took kindly to the Cape soil; and trees, such as oaks and firs, were planted. Every variety of domestic animal, too, was introduced; among them were horses, which up to that time had been unknown in South Africa, and cattle, sheep, and dogs of better breeds than those owned by the natives. The only thing which so far had not been a success was the attempt to grow wheat and barley on the Cape peninsula. The seeds sprouted and the young plants grew up; but before the grain had time to ripen the wheat was invariably cut off by the south-east wind, which regularly blows from October to March. After several successive crops had been destroyed, it was observed that the country at the back of a mountain called the Devil's Peak was much more sheltered, and some corn was accordingly sown at

a spot which, in allusion to a round patch of bushes, received the name of Rondebosch. The experiment succeeded admirably, and thenceforth the settlers found no difficulty in providing themselves with as much corn as they required.

CHAPTER II.

THE DUTCH COLONY.

THE Dutch East India Company had, so far, every reason to be satisfied with the success of its experiment. The only drawback was the expense; and this, it was suggested, might be reduced by forming a settlement of independent farmers or Boers. With this end in view, the Company discharged several married men who were willing to start on their own account, and provided them with land, tools, seeds, and everything else necessary for their success. All that was required in return was that they should undertake to sell their produce to the Company at a reasonably low rate until they had cleared off the debt.

The settlement was at first a very small one; but the Boers took kindly to the new life, and it soon became clear that the experiment would succeed. The settlers, however, had no intention of overworking themselves. They were neither idle nor unenterprising, but an idea prevailed that whenever a colony was founded slave labour should be introduced, and in 1658 several cargoes of negroes were landed in the settlement. Some were distributed among the Boers, who were also called burghers, a name which merely meant that they were

freemen, and available for the fulfilment of any duties required by the state. Most of the slaves, however, were retained by the Company, who also imported convicts and political prisoners from the Dutch possessions in Java and India. Some of these, on the conclusion of their terms of imprisonment, settled permanently in the country; and thus several new races of more or less mixed blood took up their abode in South Africa.

Meanwhile, the Hottentots, who at first had made no objection to the advent of the Dutch, began to look with suspicion on their increasing acquisitiveness. More and more land was annexed, the most fertile portions were cultivated, and the natives found that they were debarred from the use of much of the finest grass land. No doubt they had still far more space than they could occupy; but they objected to lose so large a tract of country, and by way of retaliation they began cattle lifting to a considerable extent. The Boers considered that the mere fact of being white men gave them a right to the land, and they took up arms against the Hottentots. The yellow men, however, were far too crafty to be easily caught. They concealed themselves so successfully that the Dutch were very seldom able to get to close quarters, and the so-called first Hottentot war resulted merely in the death of about half a dozen natives. The rest, with the exception of Harry and his people, then took their departure; peace was restored, and an agreement was made by which the Dutch were confirmed in the possession of the land already occupied by them, and certain roads were specified by which alone the Hottentots were thenceforth to approach the settlement.

At the same time, a strong fence, presenting serious difficulties to would-be raiders, was constructed to mark the boundary of the colony.

In 1662 Van Riebeeck was appointed to a post in India; but under the rule of his successor the colony continued to prosper. A church was built, and placed under the charge of a resident clergyman; and as the importance of the colony was now established, a strong fortress was constructed to guard the principal settlement at Cape Town. This fortress, when completed, was considered impregnable, and was regarded by the Company as the "frontier fortress" of India. It was strongly garrisoned, and as the demand for supplies was proportionately increased, more men obtained their discharge from the Company, and began farming on their own account, with the result that in a few years the settlement outgrew the territory enclosed by the boundary fence, and spread to Wynberg. Colonists were now invited to come from Europe; and with the view of maintaining peaceable relations with the natives, the Company, instead of taking possession of the additional land, purchased it from the Hottentots for the nominal sum of £1,600. This price was supposed to be paid in goods; but the real value of the articles—if the accounts of the Company are to be believed—was less than £10. For this trifling consideration the whole stretch of country from False Bay on the south to Saldanha Bay on the north became the property of the Dutch.

All went smoothly for some years, and the Hottentots appeared to be satisfied with their bargain; but one of their chiefs, named Gonnema, for some unexplained reason, came into collision with the white

people. He captured, and afterwards killed, eight burghers who, with a slave, had gone up the country on a hunting expedition; moreover, about the same time some of his followers attacked a Dutch trading post at Saldanha Bay, and murdered four men. The Dutch retaliated, and a force sent against Gonnema surprised the chief and cut him off from his stronghold in the hills. He and his men contrived to escape; but the Dutch captured a number of sheep and cattle, and afterwards shot several Hottentots who tried to recover their property.

Other Hottentot tribes took the side of the Dutch; and some months later, when Gonnema was again surprised, the whole of his cattle once more became the spoil of the Europeans. This was the beginning of a long course of guerilla warfare. Gonnema took refuge in the mountains, and though he took care to avoid another encounter with the whites, he managed to cut them off from the allied tribes. Neither side, however, could make much impression on the other; and when, after four years, Gonnema made overtures of peace, his advances were favourably received.

Hitherto the settlers had troubled themselves little about cattle breeding on their own account, since they had always been able to obtain as much stock as they required from the natives. But the war with Gonnema showed them that this source of supply was anything but reliable, since any determined tribe could easily cut off the settlement from all intercourse with the interior. The inconvenience of such a state of affairs was too great to be lightly risked, and after the restoration of peace the Company decided to undertake cattle breeding on a large scale.

The burghers were accordingly invited to add cattle rearing to agricultural farming, and Simon Van der Stel, who about that time became governor of the Cape, entered heartily into the scheme. He persuaded eight burghers, with their families, to remove from Rondebosch and settle farther inland at a place named after him Stellenbosch, where he established large vineyards and cattle runs, in addition to ordinary farms. Every inducement was offered to people willing to take up their abode in the country, and after a few years another agricultural settlement was formed at Drakenstein. The scheme was further advanced by an arbitrary decree of King Louis the Fourteenth, who in 1685 drove about four hundred thousand Huguenots out of France. As numbers of them took refuge in Holland, it became necessary for many Dutch people to look farther afield for a livelihood. The Cape offered just the chance they wanted, and about four hundred Dutch and French emigrants sailed for the colony. Van der Stel would have preferred to people South Africa exclusively with Dutchmen, but he had to take what he could get; and the new settlers on their arrival were so judiciously mixed that in the course of a few years all differences of nationality disappeared.

The intermixture of races—Europeans, Africans, and Asiatics—at the Cape necessarily brought about a modification of language. The official and prevailing tongue was Dutch, and this language continued to be spoken; but many of the inflections were dropped, grammar was disregarded, and though correct Dutch was still used in the church services, in ordinary conversation the language was reduced to the simplest possible form. Churches and schools were built at the more important

settlements ; law courts were established in Cape Town ; a governing council was formed ; and an officer, called a landdrost, was stationed at Stellenbosch to discharge the functions of a magistrate. Taxes were levied ; and for the defence of the colony the burghers were formed into a sort of militia, and carefully drilled and instructed in the use of arms under officers styled field-cornets.

The Company, however, claimed a monopoly of trade, and the price of every article was fixed by the government, which farmed out various trading rights to the colonists who were willing to pay the highest sum for the privilege of being allowed to supply ships with such stores as they might require. At the same time, the Company reserved to itself the right of being first in the market, and no private traders were allowed to dispose of anything until the government stores were sold.

The increasing number of settlers made it necessary to enlarge the colony, and in 1700 the governor, Wilhelm Adrian Van der Stel, the son of Simon Van der Stel, crossed the first mountain range, and opened up a beautiful tract of land, now known as the Tulbagh Basin. The soil was magnificently fertile ; but at that time the difficulty of crossing the mountains precluded the basin from attracting much favour as an agricultural centre. Tulbagh was, however, equally well adapted for pasturage, and some of the settlers who had devoted themselves to cattle rearing removed, or, in the Dutch phrase, "trekked," with their families, their flocks and herds, their household goods, and everything that was theirs, to the newly-annexed pasture lands.

The move soon became popular, and as time went

on many of the younger colonists joined the "trek-boeren," or wandering farmers, who gradually spread themselves farther and farther afield, travelling at will over the grass and bush covered land known as the "veldt," and occasionally visiting the immense plains of the Karroo, in order to give their cattle a change of pasturage. On these wanderings a wagon with a tilt cover served the Boer and his family as a house. He was entirely his own master, and almost his only obligation was to pay the government a yearly tax of £5, which entitled him to use 6,000 acres of land, and spend two months annually on the Karroo. It was true that the life was a very rough one, and the liability to a raid from the Bushmen prevented these frontier farmers from building good houses or indulging in anything very valuable in the way of furniture. But notwithstanding hardships, the wild free life had many attractions, and as elephants abounded, a good many of the Boers found elephant hunting a profitable addition to their avocations.

Unfortunately, Governor Van der Stel was far too fond of making money, and not being satisfied with the various privileges and perquisites which he enjoyed as governor, he acquired large flocks and herds, as well as extensive farms and vineyards. This grasping conduct was extremely annoying to the burghers. They made no objection to the monopolies claimed by the Company, but they regarded Van der Stel's action as a distinct encroachment on their rights. As governor he had facilities for ensuring the sale of his goods such as no other grazier or farmer enjoyed, and the Boers saw with alarm that their opportunities of doing business either with the Company or with passing vessels

would be greatly diminished if Van der Stel were allowed to farm on such an extensive scale.

Accordingly, a formal accusation against the governor, the clergyman at Cape Town, and another officer, was drawn up and forwarded to the Governor-General of the Company in India, and also to the directors in Holland. Van der Stel soon learned what was afoot, and knowing the gravity of the charges brought against him, he drew up a counter memorial, and endeavoured to obtain influential signatures. But the Dutch Boer is hard to drive, and though the landdrost of Stellenbosch and the governor himself used every means to obtain signatures, and even made a house-to-house visitation with an escort of armed men, many of the burghers flatly refused to sign. Consequently, one of the leading men, a farmer named Adam Tas, was summarily arrested, his desk and private papers were confiscated, and he himself was committed to prison.

Among the papers was found a copy of the accusation against the governor. This confirmed what Van der Stel was pleased to consider the prisoner's guilt, and within a few days seven other burghers, who were supposed to have been concerned in drawing up the obnoxious document, were also arrested. Two were imprisoned in the colony, four others were to be sent to Holland, and the seventh man was shipped off to Batavia. All seven had been offered their liberty if they would sign Van der Stel's memorial; but they refused to do so, and the governor persisted in his intention of sending the four to Holland. The memorial signed by such of the burghers as threats or persuasions had brought round to Van der Stel's way of thinking was sent at the same time in charge of one of

the fleet surgeons, who, as soon as the ships were fairly out at sea, handed over the document to the prisoners. Of this Van der Stel, of course, knew nothing; and supposing that he had arranged matters to suit himself, he continued his illegal course, riding roughshod over the burghers' rights, imprisoning some who were obnoxious to him, upsetting the established law courts, and giving all government posts to his own supporters.

Meanwhile, the burghers and the memorial were on their way to Holland. One of the men died on the voyage, but the other three reached Holland and told their tale to the directors of the Company, to whom they also showed the memorial. The directors saw that the matter was serious, for the Company had many enemies; and if its officers were proved guilty of flagrant injustice and of ill-treating free colonists, it would be made to suffer severely. Consequently, the accused officials were summoned to Europe to stand their trial. All three were dismissed the service, and Van der Stel was further punished by the confiscation of his land. Some other grievances were also redressed, and it was decreed that from that time forward no officer of the Company should hold more land than he required for a garden. All private trading by officers was likewise forbidden.

The severe penalties inflicted on Van der Stel and his associates had a most salutary effect, and all went well until, in 1713, a ship infected with smallpox anchored in Table Bay. Some of the clothing used by the sick was sent on shore to be washed, with the result that the slave women employed were speedily seized with the disease. Unfortunately, no attempt was made to prevent the infection from spreading;

slave after slave fell ill, and more than two hundred of the poor creatures died. The disease next attacked the Dutch and the Hottentots, and in the early part of the rainy season there was scarcely a house in Cape Town where there was not some one ill. Business came to a standstill; even the children had no heart for play; the streets were deserted; and so many people died that at last no more boards could be obtained to make coffins. Then the dead were hastily buried as they were; and by the time the rainy season ended, Cape Town had lost about a quarter of its white population.

The Hottentots suffered even more severely; and when, with the return of warm, dry weather, the disease disappeared, five of the principal tribes had been almost entirely swept out of existence. Thenceforth the Hottentots became practically of no account in the colony; the few who remained were allowed to manage their affairs as they pleased, and to live where they liked, except on land which was actually occupied by the colonists. The Bushmen seem to have escaped the infection, and as the wild animals retreated, or were killed off by the advancing colonists, the little yellow men developed a new aggressiveness. The destruction of the game deprived them of their means of livelihood, and they endeavoured to supply their necessities by making raids on the cattle belonging to the Boers. They were too idle to work, too weak and degraded to fight openly; but they hovered round the frontier farms, driving off sheep or cattle whenever they could find an opportunity of doing so, and occasionally firing houses or shooting a colonist with their poisoned arrows, the slightest scratch from which was certain death.

In 1755 smallpox again broke out, and raged with even greater violence than on the former occasion. In Cape Town scarcely any of those who were attacked recovered, and during the month of July more than eleven hundred people died. Hospitals were opened; but a change of weather proved the best doctor, and when the rains ceased the sickness abated and finally disappeared, but not before it had swept away most of the Hottentot tribes which had escaped on the last occasion. The Bantu tribes in the neighbourhood of the Kei River had also suffered severely. Trade was stagnant, and ruin stared the colonists in the face; but when the outlook was darkest a French fleet suddenly appeared in the bay. The price of provisions went up with a bound; and when, shortly afterwards, war was declared between France and Great Britain, both parties obtained supplies from the Cape for the use of their Indian forces.

Under the rule of Van Plettenberg, who entered on the duties of governor in 1771, a good many abuses grew up. The burghers became discontented, and to make matters worse the Bushmen began a series of raids. A number were shot by the burghers, who turned out in force to punish them; but before order was restored the Ama-Xosa,* one of the leading Kafir tribes, entered the colony from the east. At first they made no attempt to interfere with the white settlers, though they killed a good many Hottentots and drove off their cattle. Very soon, however, they extended their depredations to the Boers, and in September 1779 several families were obliged to withdraw from the frontier. On this two troops, or commandos, of the

* *Ama*, *Ma*, or *Ba*=people of.

Boer militia turned out to oppose the invaders; but the Ama-Xosa were warlike people, and though they were several times defeated, they still kept the field and refused to return permanently to their own side of the Fish River.

It was necessary that they should be reduced to order, and Adrian Van Jaarsveld, who commanded the burgher force on the eastern frontier, gave the Xosas notice to retreat on pain of being shot if they were found in Dutch territory. A few took the advice; but as the rest held their ground, Van Jaarsveld collected all the Dutch and Hottentot families in his command into laagers or fortified camps, composed of wagons drawn up in a circle, and strengthened by thorns, with which all the spaces under and between the wagons were crammed. Then leaving a few men to defend the laagers, he fell on the Xosas with the remainder of his force, and inflicted such a thorough beating that the survivors of the tribe found it convenient to retreat to their own territory.

About this time the affairs of the Dutch East India Company fell into a very unsatisfactory state. Several ships were seized by the British fleet during a war which broke out between England and Holland in 1781; and these losses, combined with the peculations of dishonest officials, reduced the Company to the verge of bankruptcy. It was unable to meet its liabilities, and to stave off the impending crash, issued paper money, the nominal value of which was considerably in excess of the amount of gold in the colony.

Meanwhile, the Xosas again crossed the Fish River. One of their chiefs had died, and as his son, Gaika, was a mere lad, some of the people requested Ndlambe,

Gaika's uncle, to act as regent. Others objected to the appointment, and the malcontents made a sudden incursion into Dutch territory. A number of cattle were seized, and so much damage was done that the landdrost of Graaf Reinet, one of the newer settlements, decided to inflict summary vengeance. He called out the men of his commando, and sent to Cape Town to ask for further assistance; but the government considered war undesirable at that moment, and, much to the disgust of the burghers, they were ordered to disperse before a single blow had been struck.

The result was a further series of depredations, and for four years the colonists suffered severely at the hands of the raiders. Then they could endure no more, and turning out suddenly, made a rapid descent on one of the kraals. This roused the various Xosa clans in the neighbourhood to fresh hostility; houses were set on fire in all directions; untold damage was done to property, and many lives were lost. At last even the patience of the government gave way, and the burghers were ordered to take up arms; but little success attended the expedition. A sort of treaty with the natives was, however, concluded; and when they solemnly promised that from that time forward they would keep the peace, the government proclaimed that the war was at an end.

CHAPTER III.

IMPORTANT CHANGES.

THE closing years of the eighteenth century found the greater part of Europe more or less involved in war. The French Revolution was so mighty an upheaval of political thought that its effects spread far beyond the country immediately concerned; and in Holland a large section of the inhabitants, who styled themselves the Patriot party, became convinced that it would be greatly to their advantage to convert their government into a republic. The rest of the Dutch, especially the official classes, desired to uphold the Stadtholder, and this faction took the name of the Orange party. The difference of opinion rose to so high a pitch that war broke out, and Great Britain, which favoured the claims of the Stadtholder, became involved in the struggle, while the Patriot party formed an alliance with the French.

International communication was slow in those days, but when the news at length reached Cape Colony the Company's officials began immediately to put the country in a state of defence. At the Cape, as well as in Holland, opinions differed, for while the officials were in favour of the Stadtholder, most of the burghers adopted the ideas of the Patriots. Both parties, how-

ever, saw that they were menaced by one common danger, for it was known that Great Britain was beginning to cast longing eyes on South Africa. Consequently the Company's servants were drilled and formed into a military corps, and a number of half-breeds and Hottentots were armed, drilled, taught civilized methods of warfare, and formed into a regiment called the Pandour Corps. The burghers were also ready to fight, but until they were actually required for service they remained at home.

Meanwhile, dissatisfaction with the government was decidedly on the increase. The paper money, which was well known to represent non-existent gold, was equally disliked and distrusted; new taxes weighed very heavily on the agricultural population; and the arrangement recently concluded with the Kafir tribes was extremely unpopular. The feebleness of the Company's government was apparent, and the burghers of Graaf Reinet and Swellendam, losing all patience, cast off their allegiance to the Company and formed themselves into small republics of their own. Before the end of 1795 the colony was in a state of the utmost confusion, and was altogether unfit to repel the attacks of any outside enemy. There were few, if any, regular troops, and the whole military force in the colony, including the Pandours, but exclusive of the burghers, numbered less than 1,300 men, who were under the general command of Colonel E. J. Gordon. The principal white regiment, called the National Battalion, moreover, was composed of men of various races and creeds, and as many of them cared not a jot for the Dutch, the regiment was not particularly reliable.

In Europe affairs were moving rapidly. Towards

the end of 1794 the French entered Holland, and the Stadtholder, finding that most of his subjects were opposed to him, fled the country, and with some difficulty reached England, where he received a friendly welcome. His flight smoothed the way for the Patriot party, who proclaimed the Batavian Republic and formed an alliance with the French. The British Government forthwith dispatched a fleet to the Cape, and the exiled Stadtholder, who seems to have favoured the expedition, signed an order requiring the officials at the Cape to hand over all the fortifications to the English.

Armed with this document, Admiral Elphinstone and Major-General Craig, with the forces under their command, proceeded to Simon's Bay, where the Dutch had a small settlement. They presented the Stadtholder's orders to Mr. Sluysken, the governor of the Cape; but though he and most of the other officials belonged to the Orange party, he did not see his way openly to obey the commands of a prince who had fled from his country, more especially as the bulk of the Cape population did not favour his rule. But what Sluysken dared not do openly he thought he might accomplish in an underhand manner; he was more loyal to his prince than to his country, and rather than own the republican government, he determined to play secretly into the hands of the invaders.

Accordingly, he first held a protracted correspondence with the British commanders, and then leaving Simon's Town to its fate, established his little army in a strong position at Muizenberg, a few miles from Cape Town. There for a time he remained undisturbed, while the British force landed and took possession of the abandoned buildings at the head of Simon's Bay.

On August 7, 1795, General Craig, with a force of 1,600 men, advanced upon the Dutch position. If Colonel de Lille, who commanded the colonial troops, had really intended to fight, he might easily have rendered his camp impregnable; but he had done nothing of the sort, and instead of making even a show of fighting, as the British advanced he retired towards Cape Town with most of his men. A few burghers and artillerymen made a feeble resistance, but without the support of the other troops they could do little, and were forced to retreat. The road to Cape Town was now open, and General Craig, who a few days later received a reinforcement of 350 men, obtained possession of most of the ammunition and provisions abandoned by the Dutch in their hasty retreat from Muizenberg.

Early in September another reinforcement arrived from England and joined General Craig. The burghers by this time had awoke to the fact that they had been betrayed by the Company's officials, and several of them, considering that under the circumstances further resistance was useless, had already gone home. The rest, with the Pandours and the National Battalion, under the general command of Captain Van Baalen, were in camp at Wynberg; and on the fourteenth of September, when the British advanced upon Cape Town, the burghers hovered round the column, although they were not able to check the advance. They were thoroughly in earnest, but Van Baalen, like De Lille, was merely playing with them. He made a show of opposition, but as soon as the English approached he ordered the National Battalion to retire. The burghers stood firm, but by themselves they were practically helpless; and seeing that resistance was use-

less, they lost heart and fled. Their confidence in the government was utterly destroyed, and leaving Cape Town to its fate they dispersed to their homes.

The Dutch officials then asked for an armistice, and on the following morning they met General Craig at Rondebosch. Seeing that they were perfectly willing to give up the colony, nothing remained to be done but to arrange the terms of capitulation, and these were certainly extremely favourable to the Dutch. It was a war of governments, not a war of peoples; and while the English required the surrender of the Dutch troops, all private rights were respected, and it was arranged that taxation should, if possible, be reduced. All the Company's property was confiscated by the British, but the principal officials, on simply giving their parole, were allowed to remain in the colony or return to Europe, as they preferred. Better terms could scarcely have been desired, and on September 16, 1796, the Dutch troops marched out of Cape Town. The same evening General Clarke, who had arrived with the last reinforcement from England, took possession of the castle.

The change of government, though anything but agreeable to the burghers, was, on the whole, advantageous to the colony. Such of the Company's clerks as chose to swear fidelity to the British rule were allowed to retain their posts; the system of taxation was revised; free trade was granted; monopolies were abolished; and the burghers were allowed to sell their produce where and as they chose. Moreover, the government, while it accepted the paper money from the colonists, paid all its own debts in coin of the realm. These wise measures quickly reduced the burghers'

opposition; the new state of affairs daily increased in popularity; and except at Graaf Reinet the British rule was everywhere peacefully accepted. There, however, the burghers refused to submit; and the government, instead of taking active measures against them, instituted a sort of blockade. The recalcitrant republic was thus cut off from all sources of supply, and after holding out for about a year, was very unwillingly forced to surrender, though the Dutch East India Company and the Batavian Republic had made one or two attempts to send in stores and ammunition.

After remaining a few weeks in Africa, General Clarke and Admiral Elphinstone went on to India, leaving General Craig in charge of the newly-acquired colony. Being a wise man, he did his best to make his government acceptable to the colonists, and they soon learned to respect him personally, no matter how strongly they might object to British rule. He did not, however, remain long at the head of affairs, for in May 1797 the Earl of Macartney, who had been appointed governor, arrived at Cape Town.

Lord Macartney's government was free from most of the abuses which had prevailed when the Company was in power. He was a man of the strictest honour, true and upright in all his dealings; but before he had been many months at the Cape the colonists found that free trade was abolished, and that, though the government did not insist on a monopoly, its ideas on the conduct of trade were in some respects very similar to those held by the Company. It claimed the right to fix the prices of all produce, and to compel the Boers to supply whatever was needed for the ships and the troops. At the same time the eastward trade of the

colony was placed entirely in the hands of the English East India Company, and all European goods were heavily taxed. It was true that the government was always ready to pay a fair price, but the burghers had tasted the sweets of liberty, and they were bitterly opposed to the change. They dared not, however, express their opinions openly, for the governor kept a tight hand over them, and anybody who found fault with the government, or even professed to prefer a republic, was liable to imprisonment.

Lord Macartney's term of office soon came to an end. He had scarcely been eighteen months in the colony when ill-health forced him to return to England, and the government was carried on by Major-General Dundas. So far matters had gone quietly, but scarcely had Dundas taken office when a disturbance was caused by the arrest of Adrian Van Jaarsveld, a burgher of Graaf Reinet. He was charged with forgery, and as his custodians were taking him to Cape Town for trial, they were attacked by a party of Boers, who rescued the prisoner.

No doubt the insurgents expected to be largely supported; but as a force, consisting partly of regular troops and partly of Hottentots, was sent against them, most of the burghers considered discretion the better part of valour, and refused to have anything to do with the revolt. On this many of the rebels expressed their regret for what had occurred, and asked forgiveness, but were told that before pardon could be accepted they must lay down their arms and offer submission at a certain place. No promise was made, but the burghers supposed that if they accepted the terms the desired amnesty would immediately follow, so they

repaired to the appointed spot and duly laid down their arms. To their great surprise, however, they were arrested, and ninety-three men out of one hundred and thirteen who submitted were mulcted in fines, while the rest were imprisoned at Cape Town. About fifty others held out for a time, but though most of them eventually submitted and received pardon, a few of the most implacable fled to Kafirland and took refuge with one of the native chiefs.

Scarcely was this affair settled when the Xosas made another incursion into the colony. The young chief Gaika had by this time reached man's estate, and wished to assume the position from which he had been ousted by Ndlambe. Both chiefs found supporters, and a civil war broke out, in which Ndlambe was defeated and taken prisoner. After a time, however, he managed to escape, and fled with his supporters into British territory, where, having been joined by other Kafir tribes, he began a series of raids on the frontier farms. The Boers escaped as best they could, with or without their property, and in the course of a few days scarcely a single white man remained in the district.

Not content with this, the Kafirs next fell upon a party of British troops under the command of General Vandeleur, who was marching to Algoa Bay. The attack was a sudden one, but the British fought pluckily, and for a time beat off their assailants. The repulse, however, was only temporary, and Vandeleur hastened to form a laager, as a party of twenty men, who were out on patrol duty, had not come in. Unfortunately, the wild bush-clad country favoured surprises, and the unfortunate patrol had been surrounded by a much stronger force of furious Kafirs. The men

defended themselves nobly, and while their ammunition lasted, held the foe at bay ; but when their powder and shot were expended, the enemy rushed in upon them. Fighting to the last the little band fell one by one, and only four of the whole number contrived to escape with their lives.

The laager was scarcely completed when again the Xosas rushed forward. Their former repulse had excited them to madness, and they rushed like a black, moving wall on the defences. As they advanced their foremost ranks were mowed down by a shower of bullets, but as fast as one fell another took his place, and, with the assegai handles broken short for greater convenience in hand-to-hand fighting, again and again the warriors charged the laager. But every rush was met by a withering fire, and so many fell without having even a chance of getting to close quarters, that at last the assault was abandoned.

General Vandeleur made no attempt to pursue the enemy. He continued his march to Algoa Bay, where he encamped some of his men, and then, having sent the rest back to Cape Town, he called out a commando of the burghers to punish the Kafirs and drive them back to their own territory. But the war was not carried on with any energy, and when they had assembled they were kept waiting for some time while Vandeleur parleyed with the Xosas, who had been reinforced by a number of deserters from the Pandour Corps. The result was anything but good, for the burghers became disgusted with the whole affair, and the Xosas came to the conclusion that the white men dared not attack them. Instead of retiring they began raiding more vigorously than ever ; cattle were carried

off wholesale, farms were destroyed, and a number of murders were committed.

After a few weeks of indecision General Vandeleur roused himself to another spurt of energy. More burghers were called up, and a small British force was dispatched to Algoa Bay. This, however, seems to have been a mere flourish of trumpets, for General Dundas was unwilling to fight, and came himself to the disturbed district in the hope of arranging terms of peace. In this he was so far successful that Ndlambe was induced to retire to the country east of a stream called Bushman's River, where he promised to live peaceably.

This arrangement was anything but satisfactory to the Boers, who had far too much experience of the Xosas to desire them for neighbours. Their fears proved to be well founded, for though, for a time, the natives kept the peace fairly well, they soon got tired of a quiet life, and took to raiding more vigorously than before.

Meanwhile, Sir George Yonge had arrived from England and assumed the reins of government. His appointment at that time was rather an unfortunate one, for though he does not seem to have been personally dishonest, he allowed his subordinates to do what they pleased. Discontent consequently spread rapidly, and in less than eighteen months the home government had received so many complaints of misgovernment and arbitrary treatment that Sir George was recalled in disgrace.

General Dundas then returned to office, and shortly afterwards he again found it necessary to repress the Xosas. A commando was sent against them, and

several battles were fought, in which the Boers were generally successful, until, after they had been several weeks in the field, their commander was killed in battle. The commando then broke up, but it re-assembled early in 1803; and the Xosas, finding that the white men had no intention of allowing them to have things all their own way, now begged for peace, and promised that they would retire at once from British territory.

A few weeks later Cape Colony again changed hands. The Peace of Amiens was signed by the British, French, and Dutch Governments in March 1802, and by one of the terms of the treaty Great Britain was required to give the colony back to the Dutch, who, in February 1803, triumphantly marched into Cape Town and resumed the government.

Though a certain number of English settled at the Cape, most of the colonists were of Dutch extraction, and March 1, 1803, was appointed to be observed as a day of thanksgiving for the deliverance of the colony from foreign masters. On the same day the governor, Lieutenant-General Janssens, entered office, and most of the newly-appointed subordinate officers also took up their duties. The Dutch government soon became highly popular, and many of the burghers who had been heartily tired of the bankrupt East India Company were delighted that the colony had come under state rule. The Kafirs, too, were reduced to order, and it was carefully impressed upon them that the Batavian Republic—which the simple souls supposed to be a powerful foreign prince—was a very formidable person, with whom no wise man should venture to take liberties. In this belief they did all in their power to

make peace, and established friendly relations with the subjects of this awe-inspiring potentate.

Peace being thus assured, Janssens set to work to improve the state of domestic affairs in the colony. Schools were established; but the burghers cared little for education, and the measure was distinctly unpopular. Civil marriages were also made legal, and several new magisterial districts were formed. Peace, however, did not last long. In the course of 1803 Great Britain and Holland again became involved in war, and Janssens was obliged to concentrate most of his energies on providing for the defence of the colony. Much to his disgust, the Dutch government was so short of troops that one of the best regiments at the Cape was almost immediately drafted off to Java. Janssens was therefore compelled to do his best with the Pandours and such volunteer troops as he could raise, among whom were included an artillery corps formed principally of men descended from the Malay convicts who had remained at the Cape.

For nearly three years all went on quietly, and the storm clouds which overshadowed Europe did not extend to the Cape. Then, on January 4, 1806, sixty-three British ships came to anchor in Table Bay, and a strong force, commanded by Major-General Sir David Baird, was landed some few miles from Cape Town. The news soon reached the Dutch governor, and leaving a garrison in Cape Town he marched against Sir David with a motley force, composed of a few Dutch soldiers, a good number of burghers, some French sailors who had been shipwrecked on the coast, an assortment of Hottentots, slaves, and Malays, and a German regiment which had entered the Dutch service.

The two armies met early on the morning of the eighth of January. The colonial force was greatly outnumbered, but the men advanced to the attack, and on both sides the artillery opened fire. This was too much for the Germans. As the English shot crashed into their ranks their courage disappeared, and they took to their heels. Not so the burghers, who, with their coloured allies, made a dogged resistance; but the loss of the German regiment had terribly weakened them, and bravely as they fought a tremendous charge from Baird's Highland regiment completely routed them. They were compelled to fall back, and Janssens, seeing that the day was lost, withdrew from the field, and having sent his French assistants to Cape Town, retired with the colonists to the mountains.

When the news of his defeat reached Colonel Von Prophalow, who was in command of the Cape Town garrison, he saw that further resistance was useless, and the next morning he sent a messenger with a flag of truce to meet Sir David and arrange for a capitulation. That evening the British troops entered Fort Knokke, one of the outer defences of Cape Town, and on the following day the two commanders signed the terms of capitulation. These were, on the whole, favourable to the Dutch; for though the Frenchmen and the regular troops were regarded as prisoners of war, and all government property was confiscated, the colonists who had been in arms were allowed to return to their homes, private property of every description was guaranteed to the owners, all the rights of the colonists were to be maintained, and public worship was to be carried on according to the rites of the Dutch Church.

A few days later General Janssens surrendered, and it was arranged that his troops should be sent to Holland in British ships instead of being treated as prisoners of war. Any Dutch civil servants who preferred to return to Europe were allowed to accompany them; and on March 5, 1806, the last Dutch troops and officials left the Cape.

The burghers were by no means gratified at finding themselves once more under British rule, but for a time they consoled themselves with the thought that the tide of war might yet turn against the English. The news from Europe assured them that the French were almost everywhere victorious. Why, then, should they not beat the obnoxious English, and snatch Cape Colony from them? The idea was comforting, and under its influence the burghers rather sullenly settled down to await the course of events, and hope for what, in their estimation, would be better days.

Meanwhile, the Earl of Caledon, a young Irish nobleman, was appointed governor. His rule, though rather stern, was invariably just, and he did his best to provide in all ways for the well-being of the colony. The arrangement by which the price of supplies was fixed by government still remained in force, but otherwise various improvements were made in the conduct of affairs. Up to that time the Hottentots had lived under the nominal government of their own chiefs, for whom, however, they entertained no vestige of respect. They did as they pleased, and led a vagrant life, seldom working, unless, indeed, they wanted brandy or tobacco, and could not otherwise obtain the coveted luxury. As the only means of putting a stop to the evil, Lord Caledon enacted that thenceforward all Hottentots

should be subject to the ordinary laws, and forbade them to wander about the country under pain of being punished as vagrants.

When the colony changed hands the Xosas again went on the warpath. Farms were suddenly raided, cattle were seized, and the warriors again began to overrun colonial territory. The conduct of the tribe soon became unendurable; and when a number of settlers had been driven from their farms, a small force, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel John Graham, was sent to overawe them. Graham was directed to use persuasion instead of force if he possibly could; but when he tried to hold a parley with Ndlambe, that warrior declared that the country belonged to him, and he intended to keep it. As he finished speaking he blew a long blast on a horn, and the next moment several hundreds of his men rushed out of the bushes where they had lain in ambush, and endeavoured to surround the officers, whose horses, fortunately, were fresh. Seeing that to attempt resistance would be worse than useless, they galloped off, and just managed to reach their camp without being overtaken by the fleet-footed Xosas. Ndlambe now became more aggressive than ever, and in the course of a few weeks several farmers were murdered. It was necessary that some definite action should be taken, and early in 1812 a strong force of burghers and Hottentots advanced upon the Xosas, while English troops occupied the country in the rear of the advancing column.

This time the Xosas saw that something serious was intended, and without waiting to fight they fled hurriedly to their own territory. A few women were

captured, but when they had been instructed to tell their countrymen that any one caught raiding would in future be punished with death, they were set free and allowed to go home. It was obvious, however, that the Xosas were not to be trusted; and a line of fortified posts, the chief of which received the name of Grahamstown, was constructed to guard the frontier.

About this time it became clear to the burghers that their hopes of seeing the English defeated were destined to be disappointed. The French, instead of conquering the British, were themselves defeated over and over again, and in 1813 the banished Stadtholder went back to Holland and resumed the government of the country. His return sealed the fate of Cape Colony, for at the Convention of London, signed in August 1814, it was agreed that in consideration of a payment by Great Britain of £6,000,000 sterling, Cape Colony and some territory in South America should be definitely handed over to the British.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ENGLISH IMMIGRATION.

UNFORTUNATELY for Cape Colony, Lord Charles Somerset, who was appointed governor immediately after the country was ceded to England, was a hard, unsympathetic man, and used his power in a tactless way which often gave deep and needless offence. But much as the Boers disliked the new administration, most of them submitted quietly, and for the first year that Lord Charles was in office no disturbance occurred. Then a frontier Boer named Frederik Bezuidenhout was charged with maltreating a native servant, and was cited to appear before a court and answer for his conduct. He did not, however, pay any attention to the summons; and when Hottentot troops were sent to arrest him he opened fire upon them. They returned the fire, and Bezuidenhout was shot dead.

His friends, forgetting apparently that he himself was entirely to blame, were extremely indignant at this summary treatment, and some of them took an oath to force the government to withdraw the Pandours from the district. But the malcontents received little sympathy, and when troops were sent to restore order, the more sober-minded burghers sided with them and

helped to capture the insurgents, one of whom, Jan Bezuidenhout, strongly resisted, and with the help of his wife and little sons stood at bay until he was shot by the troops.

A special commission was appointed to deal with the rebels, and after a full investigation all the prisoners were sentenced to punishment. Six were condemned to death; and as the governor, who held the prerogative of mercy, took a very severe view of the case, five of the six were hanged. The other was reprieved; but the execution sent a shock through the whole colony, and did much to prejudice the burghers against English rule. At the same time it had, no doubt, a deterrent effect; for, however dissatisfied the Dutch colonists might be, they refrained thenceforth from openly showing their feelings.

The Kafir tribes on the frontier were still in a disturbed condition, and, as usual, had entirely forgotten their numerous promises to abstain from raiding. The line of forts which was supposed to guard the frontier was practically far from being effectual, and the young Ama-Xosa warriors frequently made a swift and silent dash across the frontier, and, under cover of the night, swooped down on some farmstead, taking possession of all the cattle belonging to the unfortunate farmer. Then, making off as quickly as they came, they were soon out of reach, for so swift and silent were their movements that it frequently happened that the farmer knew nothing of the raid until he went out in the morning and found his cattle-pens open and deserted.

Matters were not improved by the dispute between Gaika and Ndlaube, which remained undecided until the latter gained the support of a powerful witch doctor

named Makana, with whose assistance he totally defeated Gaika, and forced him to flee for his life. Gaika then appealed to the Cape government for assistance, and, though the question under dispute had, in itself, nothing to do with the British, as Ndlambe had been uniformly opposed to the presence of white men and Gaika had been, on the whole, friendly, Lord Charles Somerset considered himself justified in taking up the cudgels on his behalf. Consequently, towards the end of 1819, a British force entered the Kafir territory, and, with the assistance of Gaika's warriors, overran Ndlambe's country. The chief could not be induced to come out and fight in the open, but numerous kraals were destroyed, thousands of cattle were taken, and such horrible cruelties were committed by Gaika's blood-thirsty warriors that Colonel Brereton, the British commander, withdrew in disgust from the war. On this, Ndlambe's soldiers came out from their hiding-places, and, having defeated Gaika's army, crossed the Fish River, spreading death and destruction over the eastern districts of the colony.

Emboldened by success, Ndlambe next attacked the military post at Grahamstown, where rather more than three hundred men were in garrison. Thousands of the dusky warriors rushed on the little fort, but being armed only with assegais and knob-kerries, they could not withstand the British fire. Again and again they charged, but assegais were no match for bullets and cannon balls, and at every rush Ndlambe's warriors were shot down by scores before they could reach the walls of the fort. Seeing the attempt was useless, they at last withdrew. Three months after the attack on Grahamstown, a strong force, composed partly of

burghers and partly of regular troops, entered Ndlambe's country, drove him and his followers back to the Kei River, captured their cattle, and destroyed their kraals. On this, Makana, with the view of saving the tribe from further punishment, voluntarily gave himself up, and the war came to an end.

Ndlambe was totally defeated, and the boundary of the colony was moved eastward from the Fish River to the Keiskama and Tyumie Rivers. Additional forts were built, but colonists were not allowed to settle on the newly-annexed territory, as it was considered that by keeping it uninhabited Kafir incursions might be prevented.

For many years Cape Colony had been steadily extending, and by 1820 it covered a large stretch of country. The population, however, had not increased at anything like a corresponding rate, and outside of Cape Town there were very few English-speaking settlers in South Africa. The colony, therefore, though under English government, remained practically foreign until in 1820 a large batch of state-aided colonists came from England. A great agricultural and commercial depression had resulted from the long war with France, and the home government believed that emigration on a large scale might benefit both England and the colony. For this project £50,000 was voted by Parliament, and persons willing to emigrate were invited to apply for free passages and a grant of land. The invitation was largely accepted, and so many people sent in their names that only a comparatively small number of the most suitable could be selected. Persons of every occupation were chosen, for apparently the government believed that no matter what calling a man had

previously followed, the act of emigrating would by some kind of magic convert him into a successful farmer.

In April 1820 a number of new settlers were landed in Algoa Bay, and were forthwith sent on to the land apportioned to them. No family received less than a hundred acres of ground, and considerably larger farms were allotted to those who were accompanied by servants. The only condition attached to the grant was that every land-holder should engage to occupy his farm for at least three years. No rent was charged, and the government not only conveyed the new colonists to their farms, but supplied rations to all who required them until such time as they were able to provide for themselves.

Being thus relieved from anxiety, the colonists set to work to cultivate their ground; but unfortunately no magic change took place, and men who had begun life as shoemakers, carpenters, or tailors, did not suddenly develop a genius for farming. They did their best, but everything was against them, and even those who understood agriculture found it at first hard work to get on. Sometimes a party of Xosa cattle-lifters swooped down and relieved some unlucky farmer of his live-stock; for several seasons the wheat crops failed; and to crown the misfortunes of the settlers a terrible flood swept over the low-lying country, ruined the gardens, and carried away the houses. For those who knew nothing of agriculture matters were still worse. Many of them lost what little property they originally possessed, and very soon most of them, despairing of success, gave up the attempt to become farmers. This was the best thing they could possibly

do, for there was a great demand for mechanics of every description, and when they went back to their former occupations they obtained plenty of work at high wages.

By degrees the wave of prosperity spread over the whole colony. Port Elizabeth and Grahamstown became important places; the townships of Worcester and Somerset East were founded; various public works were undertaken by the government; a lighthouse was built at a dangerous point on the coast; a public library was founded; and last, though not least, improved breeds of sheep and cattle were brought into the country. Among the animals thus introduced were a number of valuable merino sheep, imported by Lord Charles Somerset, who established some of them at the government farms at Groote Post, and sent the rest to Somerset East. The native Cape sheep produce no wool, but with the introduction of fine-wooled sheep of various breeds, a wholesome rivalry sprang up between the farmers in different parts of the country, each of whom wished to send to market better wool than his neighbours could produce. The new breeds soon became acclimatized, and sheep-farming engaged so much attention that in course of time Cape Colony took rank among the principal wool-producing countries of the world.

By the end of 1821 the colony contained several thousand English-speaking inhabitants, and it was decreed that on and after January 1, 1825, English was to be used in all official documents, and that in 1828 it was, in like manner, to supersede Dutch in the law courts. The decree was extremely distasteful to the burghers, most of whom neither knew English nor

desired to learn it. Consequently, they were precluded from serving on juries; and in many cases every word uttered by prisoners, plaintiffs, defendants, and witnesses had to be translated to the court. In 1831, however, after a great deal of annoyance had been occasioned, it was decided that a knowledge of English was not a necessary qualification for a jurymen.

While the irritation was at its height another government measure further ruffled the feelings of the burghers, though this time many of the English colonists were fellow-sufferers with them. Paper money, the nominal value of which was greatly in excess of the amount of gold actually in existence, was still in circulation. While this remained the case the financial condition of the country was necessarily unsatisfactory; commerce could not reasonably be expected to prosper; and as this was apparent to the imperial government, the paper was withdrawn and reduced to less than half its value. The blow fell with crushing force on individual colonists, many of whom were utterly ruined; but the colony, as a whole, prospered, commerce increased, and wine, horses, and mules became important exports.

In 1828 Sir Lowry Cole assumed the reins of government, and under his rule the Hottentots were relieved from the regulations made by Lord Caledon. This was due chiefly to action taken by the Rev. Dr. Philip and other missionaries who worked under the auspices of the London Missionary Society, and held that all people, white and coloured, should have equal social and political rights. Theoretically, the idea was no doubt correct, but the plan failed in practice, and the withdrawal of the regulations led to most unsatis-

factory results, for when the Hottentots found they might do what they pleased, most of them gave up work and lived as vagrants, wandering aimlessly from place to place. Sir Lowry attempted to provide for them by forming a Hottentot settlement in the territory taken from the Xosa tribe, where, as the land was fertile and well-watered, with a little industry they might easily have become prosperous. But, unfortunately, industry was altogether foreign to the Hottentot character. As soon as the novelty wore off the settlers grew tired of their farms, and even the prospect of becoming the actual owners of the land could not induce them to work.

Sir Lowry remained in office for six years, and was then succeeded by Sir Benjamin d'Urban, under whose auspices several important reforms were made. One of these was the curtailment of the unduly lavish government expenditure, and another was the formation of a legislative council, in which five colonists chosen by the governor had seats, though practically the power remained, as before, entirely in official hands. Both these reforms were highly agreeable, but the third measure was less popular, especially among the burghers. From the early days of the Dutch settlement slaves had been imported into the colony, and though under British rule the traffic had been suppressed, the numerous slaves already in the country were still the chattels of their owners. It does not appear that they were ill-treated or even overworked, but British feeling on the subject of slavery had undergone a vast change, and in 1833 the Slaves Emancipation Act was passed. Great Britain at that time owned nineteen slave colonies, and as the government had

no wish to benefit the slaves at the expense of the masters, £20,000,000 of the public money was voted to be divided among the slave owners, as compensation for the loss of their human property.

Unfortunately, the sum, though large, was totally insufficient for the purpose, and only £1,250,000 fell to the share of Cape Colony, where more than £3,000,000 had been invested in slaves. All claims had to be proved before a board which sat in London, and as most of the owners could not attend personally, when the deductions for agent's commission and government charges had been made, they received a mere fraction of the estimated value of their slaves. Consequently, the emancipation, though in itself a most righteous act, was a crushing blow to the colony, and many well-to-do people were suddenly reduced to poverty.

CHAPTER V.

THE RISE OF THE ZULU POWER.

DURING the whole of the Dutch occupation of the Cape, with the exception of an occasional war with the Xosas, the colonists had little or nothing to do with the various Kafir tribes who occupied the country beyond the eastern boundary of the colony. So little, indeed, did the two races come in contact that the white inhabitants of South Africa troubled themselves very little about their brown-skinned neighbours, and the Kafir tribes developed and increased in power without let or hindrance from the Europeans. Some of the chiefs were men of remarkable genius, and towards the end of the eighteenth century Dingiswayo, the ruler of the Mtetwa tribe, invented a military system which he brought to such perfection that in the course of a few years he made himself paramount ruler of all the tribes in his neighbourhood.

Among the conquered tribes was the Ama-Zulu, whose chief, Senzangakona, had a son named Tshaka, who, when scarcely more than a boy, so seriously incurred his father's displeasure that, to save his life, he fled to Dingiswayo, in whose army he rose to high rank as an induna, or captain. On the death of Senzangakona he became chief of the Zulu tribe, and when Dingiswayo

was killed in battle, Tshaka was chosen by the indunas as his successor. Under his rule the two tribes speedily changed places, and having made up his mind that the Zulu power should be supreme in the land, he applied himself diligently to the task of raising his impi or army to the highest state of efficiency as a fighting machine. He had no firearms, but for the light casting assegai—which, up to that time, had been the weapon in general use—he substituted a much shorter, stronger, and heavier spear, equally convenient for cutting or thrusting. In addition to these, his warriors carried clubs, called knob-kerries, and ox-skin shields prepared in such a manner as to be almost impenetrable to anything short of a musket-ball.

Death, cruel and ignominious, was the inevitable punishment for cowardice; and as every man knew what to expect if he failed to obey orders, the army soon became invincible, and Tshaka methodically proceeded to “eat up” tribe after tribe. When the Zulus “saw red,” nothing was spared. Kraals were burned, cattle were killed and devoured, or driven off to swell the possessions of the conquerors, and men, women, and children were ruthlessly slain, unless, indeed, the army needed recruits or wives, and then the pick of the boys and girls was allowed to live. No Zulu was permitted to marry without the king’s permission, but when this was once granted he could have as many wives as he pleased.

As Tshaka pursued his career of conquest, his warriors increased in number to such an extent that he was soon able to put several impis in the field at the same time. The country included in the colony of Natal was at that time thickly inhabited by Bantu

tribes, and as the Ama-Zulu moved here and there, burning and slaying, confusion became worse confounded, for several of the native tribes, in sheer desperation, armed themselves and took the field on their own account. Others fled for their lives; and as by degrees a number of fugitives made their way from the raided country, and took up their abode south of the Tugela River, they became known as Fingos, or wanderers.

The war begun by the Zulus was not confined to the districts east of the Drakenberg Range. The interior of the country was also thickly inhabited by Bantu tribes, and as various offshoots of the Zulu race made their way northward, in 1822 a tribe which the Zulus had driven from its own territory suddenly swooped down upon another tribe inhabiting the south-eastern portion of the district afterwards called the Orange Free State. War then began west of the Drakenbergs, and as tribe after tribe became involved, the whole country was soon in commotion.

One of the principal leaders was a woman named Ntatisi, and her followers, who were called Mantati, crossed the Vaal, carrying fire and sword through the country north of that river. Following the example set by the Zulus, they destroyed the kraals in their line of march, seized the cattle, devoured the grain, and either killed the inhabitants or incorporated them into their host. Thus the Mantati increased in power to a tremendous extent, and many tribes had disappeared from the face of the earth before the conquerors in turn were defeated by the Bangwaketsi tribe, who surprised them and compelled them to turn southward. While they were somewhat disheartened

by their defeat they were met by a party of Griquas, a race of mixed European, negro, and Hottentot extraction, and were again thoroughly beaten.

These two consecutive defeats broke up the Mantati host, and the fragments wandered off to seek fortune in various directions. One of the most important sections, known as the Makololo, took up its abode near the Zambezi, and a number of others wandered southward into Cape Colony, where the authorities dispersed them and assigned them as "apprentices" to settlers who owned no slaves.

Meanwhile, Tshaka was still busy in Natal, Pondoland, and Tembuland. The Pondos suffered severely; but when the Xosas and Tembus heard that the impi was approaching, they sent to beg help from the English. Lieutenant-Colonel Somerset, with a force of a thousand men, was sent to their assistance, and after a desperate fight, succeeded in beating the impi which was overrunning the country. It was at first supposed that the vanquished troops were Tshaka's warriors, but it afterwards appeared that they belonged to one of the tribes, who, having been driven from their homes by the Zulus, had entered on a course of destruction on their own account.

Tshaka's career came to an end in 1828, when he was murdered by two of his brothers, one of whom, named Dingaan, succeeded him as king of the Amazulu. Dingaan, though less clever than Tshaka, was equally cruel and warlike, and he kept the army in the high state of efficiency which it had attained under his predecessor. He found, however, less opportunity for exercising his military talent; for, with the exception of the Swazis, almost all the tribes in the neigh-

bourhood of Zululand had been incorporated into the Zulu nation. The Swazis, however, were a warlike people, and the mountainous nature of their country enabled them successfully to defy Dingaan.

The ball which Tshaka had set in motion was still rolling, and one of his impi, commanded by an induna named Moselekatse, was rapidly developing into an independent power. Moselekatse had incurred the displeasure of Tshaka by failing to hand over the whole of the booty taken from one of the conquered tribes. Finding that he was likely to pay the penalty of his error with his life, he crossed the Drakenbergs with his impi, and proceeded to establish a new kingdom beyond the Vaal. Following the usual practice of Zulu warriors, the Matabele, as Moselekatse's followers were now called, systematically laid waste the country, and those of the inhabitants who were not slain were either drafted into the impi or married to the warriors.

Moselekatse still went in fear of Tshaka's vengeance, and fearing that the Zulus would pursue him, he converted the country behind him into a desert, in order that the impi, if it crossed the mountains, should find no means of subsistence. When he had placed a sufficient distance between himself and Zululand he stopped, constructed kraals, and applied himself to building up a nation equal, if not superior, to the Zulus. Almost the only people who escaped destruction at the hands of the Matabele were the Balatpin, a Bechuana tribe who inhabited the country on the upper reaches of the Kuruman River. These people did not owe their safety in any way to their own prowess in arms, for they were less powerful and warlike than any other Bechuana tribe. Fortunately for

them, Mr. Moffat, a missionary whose daughter afterwards married Dr. Livingstone, went in 1821 to live among them, and eight years later paid a visit to Moselekatse, who, though he could not understand what manner of man a missionary might be, soon developed the greatest possible respect for Mr. Moffat's attainments. So accomplished a man must certainly, he supposed, be the chief and ruler of the tribe with which he lived; and therefore, out of pure respect for the missionary, he refrained from making any attack upon the Balatpin kraals.

While Tshaka, Dingaan, and Moselekatse were overrunning the country, an ambitious young Zulu called Moshesh applied himself to the formation of a new nation. Plenty of material was available in the scattered remnants of the tribes destroyed in the recent wars, and fixing his stronghold in the mountains at a place called Thaba Bosigo, he gradually gathered round him people of various tribes, and united them into one compact body under the name of Basuto. He had no desire to excite the jealousy of the Zulus, so he kept Tshaka and Dingaan in good humour by numerous presents, and by this means was enabled to live in peace, for, as his genius was not of the warlike order, he preferred improving his own subjects to destroying other tribes. The Basuto, consequently, became an orderly people, occupied chiefly in cattle rearing and agriculture, though they were both able and willing to fight if necessary.

In 1831 Moselekatse sent an impi to destroy Thaba Bosigo, but the garrison greeted the besiegers with such a deadly shower of rocks and assegais that the attempt to carry the stronghold by assault was aban-

doned. The discomfited Matabele were about to retire when a Basuto warrior came down with a herd of cattle, which he drove up to the invaders' camp as a gift from Moshesh to his late enemies, and his "word," sent by the messenger, was to the effect that, as he supposed hunger had forced them to invade his country, he sent a present of cattle to feed them on their way home. The generosity of the action astonished the Matabele, and they swore that never again would they attack the man, who, after rolling stones on their heads, sent them a supply of food. The oath was faithfully observed, and thenceforth the Matabele and Basuto lived at peace with each other.

By 1835 the races on the northern and eastern borders of Cape Colony had risen to a higher degree of importance than had ever before been the case, and the Imperial Government directed Sir Benjamin d'Urban to endeavour to enter into friendly relations with them. Andries Waterboer, a Griqua captain, who resided near the Orange River, was successfully interviewed; but before Sir Benjamin had time to visit the Bantu tribes on the eastern frontier, a band of Ama-Xosa warriors made a raid on Fort Beaufort, and carried off several horses belonging to the officers. A petty chief was wounded in the fray; and when the British, in retaliation for the loss of the horses, took possession of some cattle owned by one of the sons of Gaika, the act was construed into a declaration of war.

On December 21, 1834, an impi many thousands strong made a dash across the frontier, cleared the country of cattle, burned the farmhouses, and murdered all the white people who fell into their hands. Some of the settlers managed to escape to Grahamstown, Bath-

urst, and other towns; and as soon as news of the outbreak reached Cape Town, Colonel (afterwards Sir Harry) Smith was sent to the frontier to take command of a force of burghers which was called up to punish the Xosas. The warriors, however, had retired almost as quickly as they came; and having sent the stolen cattle for safe keeping to Hintsa, the paramount chief of the tribe, who resided beyond the Kei River, they dispersed themselves among the rocks and bushes, where it was little short of impossible to find them. They had no idea of coming out to fight the British in the open, and if by chance a stronghold was cleared, the warriors merely retreated to some other fastness, and watched their opportunity to repossess themselves of the place from which they had been driven.

In such a war civilized troops who did not know the country had very little chance of success, but Sir Benjamin did his best to meet the case by forming a number of fortified camps, from which soldiers constantly scoured the Xosa territory. Then he went with Colonel Smith and a strong force to recapture the cattle. Hintsa at first showed no disposition to give way, but after several of his kraals had been destroyed he agreed to Sir Benjamin's terms, and even went so far as to offer to conduct the British to the place where the cattle were detained. In token of good faith he left his son Kreli at the camp as a hostage, but having afterwards changed his mind as to the surrender of the cattle, he attempted to make his escape, and was shot dead by a trooper who went in pursuit. Kreli then became the head of the tribe, and as one of his first acts was the restoration of the cattle, the war came to an end.

With the view of guarding against further Xosa raids, the governor, having induced several thousand Fingos to leave their location on the Kei River, gave them a strip of country on the east side of the Fish River. As there was no love lost between the Fingos and the Xosas, it was quite certain that the former would do all in their power to keep the friendship of their powerful neighbours the British; and with the view of compelling orderly behaviour Colonel Smith, with a strong force, was stationed at a newly-formed post which received the name of King William's Town. The only people who disapproved of the arrangement were Dr. Philip and his party. Their cry was practically "Africa for the Africans," and they desired to form the land belonging to the Bantu tribes into free states, in the ruling of which missionaries were to take a large share. The Ama-Xosa, they said, were naturally peaceable and teachable, and they feared that under the rule of white men the native tribes would gradually die out.

Dr. Philip, whether right or wrong, was thoroughly in earnest, and he paid a visit to England in order to lay his case before Parliament. The Colonial Secretary, Lord Glenelg, chanced to be of his way of thinking, and after a long inquiry it was decided that the territory between the Keiskama and the Kei Rivers should be restored to its original owners, on the ground that it had been acquired in "a war in which the original justice was on the side of the conquered, not of the victorious party."

The announcement was received in South Africa with the utmost alarm, for the colonists foresaw a repetition of all that they had formerly suffered at the

hands of the Xosas. They believed that no man's life or property would be safe; and while the English colonists drew up a memorial to the Home Government, in which they earnestly pleaded for a further consideration of the matter, the Boer settlers decided to withdraw altogether from the colony, and form a new settlement of their own somewhere beyond British territory.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GREAT TREK.

THE Boer has been described as “a child of the seventeenth century who has lived on to the nineteenth,” for in thought, feeling, and education the Dutch colonists in South Africa made little advance with the times, and the English hatred of slavery and desire to improve the condition of the coloured races were absolutely incomprehensible to them. Moreover, they had never acquiesced in the change of government; remaining essentially Dutch, they disliked the English rule, and bitterly resented the exclusive use of English in the law courts. These and other minor grievances caused a growing discontent among them, and the action of the Imperial Government in withdrawing from the sovereignty over the district beyond the Keiskama completed their dissatisfaction. Consequently, when some of the malcontents suggested leaving the colony and trekking northward with the view of founding a new Dutch settlement somewhere beyond the limits of British territory, the scheme at once found favour.

To the trekboeren, who for years had passed much of their time in wagons moving from pasture to pasture

with their flocks, a trek on a large scale presented no special difficulty. It was merely an organized variation on their ordinary mode of life, and especially in the northern and eastern frontier districts, families, as a rule more or less closely related to each other, banded themselves together in parties under the general leadership of the most influential person of their number, left their houses, and with their Hottentot servants moved off towards the wilds. The huge covered wagons, which contained all their household goods, were drawn by strong teams of slowly moving oxen, while the rest of the live stock was driven in front of the party. There was no need for haste, and the caravans moved deliberately over the pathless veldt, sometimes halting for weeks at a time to pasture the cattle where the grass was rich, sometimes travelling by day and camping at night in gipsy fashion. The oxen were outspanned, fires were lighted on the ground, and while the supper was cooking the whole party basked in the cheery fire-light, and the oxen rested or grazed in the immediate neighbourhood. But sometimes the way was harder, for to reach the Orange River it was necessary to cross the almost impracticable passes of the Neuveltdt or Drakenberg Range, where the utmost exertions of ten or fifteen span of oxen yoked to each wagon hardly sufficed to advance the lumbering vehicles.

The first emigrant caravan made its way by slow degrees to Zoutpansberg, near the river Limpopo, where it divided into two parties, both of which fared badly. One was murdered by the natives, and the other, which continued its march towards Delagoa Bay, lost all its cattle from the deadly bite of the tse-tse fly. Fever then broke out among the emigrants themselves, and

the party dwindled until only one man and a few women and children finally reached the Portuguese settlements on the bay, where they were treated with every kindness, until a vessel was sent to take them back to Natal.

The second caravan, which left the colony under the leadership of Hendrik Potgieter, also met with misfortune. The emigrants took up their quarters on a tongue of land between the Vet and Vaal Rivers, where land was purchased from a chief who had been lucky enough to escape the notice of Moselekatse. Potgieter and some others, however, thought they might do better, and proceeded to prospect farther northwards, and, like their predecessors, eventually arrived at Zoutpansberg. The locality delighted them, and after thoroughly inspecting it they returned to the camp. But instead of finding their friends well and happy as they had left them, they learned to their horror that one of Moselekatse's patrols, told off to prevent any one settling in the neighbourhood, had come across the camp, and falling suddenly on the unfortunate Boers, had slain them without mercy. Then, having done their worst, the Matabele had gone off to obtain reinforcements, with the view of completely wiping out the invaders.

Potgieter and his companions had barely arrived in time. They hurriedly drew the wagons together to form a laager, lashing the wheels with ropes, and cutting down thorn bushes to fill up the spaces under the wagons. Scarcely had they finished when the Matabele rushed on the camp; but the garrison had determined that if they must die they would sell their lives dearly. Almost every Boer was a dead shot, and

while the women loaded the rifles the men kept up a withering fire. Again and again the Matabele charged, but assegais and knob-kerries could make no impression on the wagons, and even when the warriors tried throwing their spears into the enclosure they did little injury to the defenders.

Almost every shot told, and at last the Matabele were forced to withdraw, leaving a hundred and fifty-five of their number dead around the laager. But they did not go empty-handed, for the cattle had unavoidably been left outside, and every hoof was driven off by the warriors. Potgieter and the survivors of his caravan consequently found themselves stranded. Without their wagons they could not travel; without oxen they could not move the wagons; and the surrounding country for many miles had been laid waste by Moselekatse. The outlook was anything but cheering; but fortunately another caravan, commanded by Gerrit Maritz, which was encamped at Thaba Ntshu, the present Bloemfontein, was able to supply oxen to take the place of those stolen by the Matabele. Potgieter and the survivors of his party thereupon joined forces with the new arrivals, and a commando of a hundred and seven farmers, with about half that number of half-breeds and blacks, marched on the nearest Matabele kraal. It chanced that neither Moselekatse nor the induna in charge was on the spot, and though the warriors defended themselves bravely, in the absence of their leaders they soon fell into confusion under the deadly volleys poured in by the Boers. They were unable to rally, and took to their heels, hotly pursued by the Boers, who shot down a number of the fugitives, and then returned to the kraal, set fire to the huts, and

took possession of about seven thousand cattle. A new settlement, which was called Winburg in honour of the victory, was then formed on the Vet River; and while it became the centre to which a number of emigrants made their way, a large caravan commanded by Pieter Retief took up its quarters at Thaba Ntshu.

So many families had by this time assembled in the territory between the Orange and Vaal Rivers that at a general council held at Winburg in June 1837, the Boers proceeded to form themselves into a new republic, to be governed by an elective chamber of deputies called the Volksraad. Landdrosts and heemraden, or assessors, were appointed, Dutch law was proclaimed, and Pieter Retief was elected commandant-general, and placed at the head of the republic.

As bands of emigrants continued to arrive, Pieter Uys, one of the leaders, suggested that they might very well occupy more land; and he proposed an adjournment to Natal, which at that time was in the hands of the Zulus. Retief favoured the idea, for he saw the desirability of securing a seaboard; but knowing the warlike character of the Zulus, he proposed that Dingaan's views on the matter should be ascertained before another trek began. The plan was generally approved, and Retief, with several companions, proceeded to interview Dingaan and inspect the country.

The journey, however, was a long and difficult one; and during Retief's absence Potgieter and Uys led another expedition against the Matabele, whose army was at least 12,000 strong. The Boers only numbered a hundred and thirty-five men, but the possession of horses and firearms gave them an immense advantage, and though

a sort of running fight continued for nine days, the Matabele could not get to close quarters. Their losses discouraged them, and at last, when the Boers were nearly worn out by incessant fighting, with little food and less time for rest, Moselekatse and his men completely lost heart. Not being accustomed to defeat they could not understand it, and seeing that a new and invincible force had come among them, they gave up the attempt to drive back the white invaders, and, moving northward with their cattle, crossed the Limpopo and seized the country occupied by the Mashona tribes. No sooner had the Matabele departed than, in the name of the emigrants, Potgieter took possession of the abandoned territory, which included almost the whole of southern Bechuanaland, about half of the Orange Free State, and nearly the whole of the Transvaal.

Retief and his companions in the meantime made their way down to Natal, where they were delighted with the beauty and fertility of the land. Two Englishmen who had resided for some years in the country joined them to act as interpreters, and they proceeded together to Umkungunhlovu, the king's kraal, which was built in the form of a huge circle, defended by a stockade, with an open space in the centre. There they found two other whites—a lad named Wood, who acted as Dingaan's interpreter, and an English clergyman, Mr. Owen, who, though well treated by the king, had so far been unable to make much impression upon him.

Dingaan was a crafty man. He received Retief and his companions with every show of friendship, ordered a grand review for their edification, and supplied them with abundance of beef and millet beer, the principal

Zulu luxuries. Retief was invited to state his errand, and the king listened attentively while the commandant-general explained the wishes and objects of the Boers. Dingaan expressed his readiness to allow them to settle in his country, but said that in token of sincerity they must first give a practical proof of friendship by recovering a number of cattle which Sikonyela, one of the sons of Ma Ntatisi, had carried off some time before from a Zulu kraal. Retief and his companions accepted the condition, for it seemed only reasonable that Dingaan should require something more than mere words; and they returned to Winburg, which was at no great distance from Sikonyela's country.

A commando visited the chief, who gave up the stolen cattle without demur, and then the emigrant band, with their own and Dingaan's cattle, and about a thousand wagons containing their other property, slowly climbed the difficult passes of the Drakenberg, and went down to the bank of the Bushman's and Bluekranz Rivers in the Zulu territory. There the bulk of the party camped in several detachments to wait while Retief, with about a hundred men, sixty-five of whom were Boers, went to Umkungunhlovu to restore the stolen cattle to Dingaan. Some of the party mistrusted the king, and tried to persuade Retief not to risk his life at the Zulu capital; but he would not believe that any suspicion of unfairness could attach to so apparently honest a man, and he refused to remain at the camp.

Dingaan expressed extreme gratification at the return of the cattle, and he requested Mr. Owen to write out a formal document, by which a large tract of country was conveyed to the Boers. Everything

seemed to be above-board and peaceful; and as Zulu etiquette allowed no one to carry arms in the presence of the king, Mr. Retief and his men left their weapons outside the kraal when they went to meet Dingaan. Again the king received them with every sign of friendship. Another sham fight was held for their benefit, and then, without a moment's warning, Dingaan suddenly ordered his men to fall upon them. Mr. Wood endeavoured to induce him to spare them, but he would not hear of doing so; he must, he said, protect his country in his own way, and the Dutchmen were then and there led off to the place of execution and clubbed to death.

But it was not considered enough to destroy the leaders, and Dingaan ordered his impi to eat up the white men's camp, which was distant at least eleven days' march. Travelling swiftly and silently in the Zulu fashion, the warriors reached the foremost encampment in the early hours of the morning; and as the emigrants, who were entirely unsuspecting of danger, had made no attempt to form a laager, they fell on the sleeping people and murdered them as they lay. Only one young man escaped. He was in charge of the cattle when the Zulus made their attack, and contriving to leap unseen upon a horse, he galloped off to the next encampment and gave the alarm. In a moment all was activity; old and young set to work to form a laager; and when they had strengthened their defences by every means in their power, they calmly awaited the coming of the Zulus.

They did not have to wait long, for a few minutes after the defences were finished the impi was seen approaching; and as the black soldiers rushed up, the

Boers stood to their posts and greeted them with a storm of bullets. For a moment the Zulus were staggered, but recovering, they again and again dashed forward, only to be mowed down by the deadly hail of lead. Some few, indeed, managed to dash through the zone of fire and reach the laager; but they came no farther, for some of the women, who could find no better weapons, had armed themselves with hatchets, and cut down every warrior who laid a hand on the wagons. Even children took part in the defence, and at last the Zulus were beaten off.

Night was at hand, but no one slept, and while some of the people kept guard others passed the time in prayer until morning dawned, and the whole band of emigrants assembled to consider what course should be taken. One or two men suggested that they should retreat, but the women were unanimous in opposing the idea; they would fight, they declared, to the last drop of their blood, but they would never leave the country until they had avenged their murdered friends. They regarded the punishment of the murderers as a solemn duty which they owed to themselves and to God; and becoming transformed from peaceful emigrants to stern, prayerful warriors, they marched forward with a firm faith in the righteousness of their cause.

News of the disaster soon reached Mr. Uys, who, with another band of emigrants, was in camp on the Drakenberg; and from him it was passed on to Winburg, where Potgieter had remained with other Boers who did not care to go down to Natal. From both camps men turned out to help their friends, and some Englishmen who had settled at Port Natal also offered to come with a detachment of natives to avenge

their two countrymen who had been killed in the massacre at Umkungunhlovu. A little difficulty now arose, for both the Boer leaders wished to take the general command of the expedition; but after some discussion it was decided that they should take joint charge of the commando, and that the Englishmen should lead their own men, and attack Dingaan from the south.

The route chosen by the Boers lay through an uninhabited region, but before they reached Umkungunhlovu they came in contact with Dingaan's army. At first the Zulus appeared to give way, and began to retreat up a long valley shut in on either side by hill ranges. The Dutch pursued them, and when they were well into the valley, with little room to manœuvre, they suddenly saw that the hillsides were alive with warriors. The flight of the first impi was a cleverly-laid scheme to draw them into an ambush, and they found that their retreat was cut off. They were surrounded on every side by a vastly stronger force; but their fire was so deadly that the Zulus were shot down as fast as they advanced, and at length so many had fallen that most of the Boers were able to dash through the ranks and escape.

Only ten Boers were killed, but among them was Commandant Uys, who, while helping a wounded companion, was himself wounded by an assegai. He fell, and one of his sons, a lad fifteen years of age, seeing him on the ground, galloped to his assistance, but had scarcely reached his father when the Zulus cut him down.

The Englishmen, whose party was made up of a motley collection of natives, including a number of deserters from the Zulu army, fared still worse. They

met the enemy near the Tugela River, and, like the Dutch, were drawn into an ambush by a pretended retreat on the part of the enemy; but they fought so well that seventeen Englishmen and fifteen hundred natives—most of whom had no firearms—three times beat off a Zulu force seven thousand strong.

But at last the fortune of the day turned, and the Zulus, having received a reinforcement, managed to rush in on the Englishmen and divide their force into two parts. One section made its way down to the Tugela and attempted to cross; but the Zulus, seeing the men's intention, followed them to the water's edge and endeavoured to cut them off. Many fell, fighting desperately; but at last four Englishmen, with about five hundred natives, managed to reach the farther bank and escape from their pursuers.

The other section was hopelessly hemmed in; but, standing at bay, the gallant fellows fought so well that when the last man fell about three thousand of the enemy lay dead. So far the Zulus had had decidedly the best of the war, and for some months the Boers remained quietly at Potchefstroom, where they built a fortified village, out of which they refused to be tempted by any stratagem which the wily Dingaan could invent.

About seven months after the battle on the Tugela Andries Pretorius was elected commandant-general. His first act was to renew hostilities, and with an army less than five hundred strong he advanced upon Umkungunhlovu. By this time the Boers had learned to be cautious, and instead of camping in the open, as they had formerly done, they took a number of wagons and formed a laager at every halting-place. But while

they took all reasonable precautions for their own defence they trusted implicitly in divine protection. In the camp prayers and psalms took the place of songs and jests, and the Boers vowed that if they were victorious they would build a church and hold an annual day of thanksgiving for their deliverance from the Zulu power.

The two armies met on December 16, 1838, when the Zulus in force attacked the laager. Behind their wagons the Boers were invincible, and when the Zulus at length retreated they left three thousand dead, while a stream which flowed near the laager was so deeply stained with blood that it received the name of the Blood River.

After this defeat Dingaan abandoned Umkungunhlovu, and when Pretorius reached the kraal he found that it had been destroyed. The Zulu king took refuge in the mountains, where the Boers could not overtake him; so they gave up the attempt, and returned to Potchefstroom with several thousand cattle looted from the Zulus. On their retreat Dingaan came out of his hiding-place, restored his kraal, and pretended to wish for peace. The pretence, however, was so obvious that the Boers, instead of scattering over the country, located themselves at Pietermaritzburg, which was named in honour of the two leaders, Pieter Retief and Gerrit Maritz. The town covered a considerable extent of country, for instead of building the houses close together, the Boers constructed a sort of farm settlement, with a large tract of land round each of the houses. Later on, the memorial church was also built, and on every sixteenth of December Dingaan's Day is observed with special prayer and thanksgiving.

But Dingaan's power was almost at an end, for in the latter part of 1839 his half-brother Panda rose up against him, and being joined by a number of Zulus who were tired of incessant fighting, he deposed the king. With the view of establishing his power Panda asked assistance from the Boers, and in January 1840 Pretorius, with four hundred Boers, marched with Panda against Dingaan's force. On this, Dingaan, who had had enough of the European method of fighting, sent Tambusa, one of his principal indunas, to the Dutch camp to ask for peace. No sooner, however, did he arrive than, in utter disregard of honour, he was seized, tried by court-martial, and executed, for having been concerned in the massacre of Retief's party.

While Pretorius was thus covering his name with disgrace, the two Zulu forces met. At first Dingaan had the advantage, but many of his men were tired of his rule, and after the battle began a number of them deserted to Panda. The rest, now hopelessly outnumbered, fought desperately ; but while the battle was still undecided some one raised the cry that the Boers were coming. This turned the scale in Panda's favour, for now the very name of Boer seemed to strike terror into the hearts of the bravest warriors ; and without attempting further defence, or even waiting to see if the Dutch were really coming, the remains of the force fled panic-stricken from the field. Dingaan then gave up the struggle. Knowing that if he was caught his life would be forfeit, he fled the country with a few of his friends who were still faithful to him ; but his enemies were numerous, and one day while he was wandering among the hills he was treacherously mur-

dered. All the Zulus then acknowledged Panda as their king; and as the Boers felt secure from further attacks, before the year ended the new "Republic of Natalia" was proclaimed, and Dutch colours were hoisted at Pietermaritzburg.

CHAPTER VII.

NEW POSSESSIONS.

THE Imperial Government had again and again declared that Great Britain had no intention of enlarging her South African possessions, but one of the results of the great trek was a considerable modification of this view. No one at first attempted to interfere with the malcontent Dutch, and they were allowed to form their new republic and manage their own affairs in the manner most pleasing to themselves. Their way soon showed itself to be a very bad one, for among the whole body of emigrants there was scarcely a man who had any genius for government, or who had received more than the most meagre education. The Bible was the only book of which most of them had the slightest knowledge; and of other matters they were, as a rule, totally ignorant, even believing that the world was flat, and that if they went far enough there would be danger of falling over the edge.

Unfortunately, the recent war with the Zulus had raised their hatred of the coloured races to boiling point. They refused to allow Kafirs or Zulus to cross their frontier or settle in their country; and Bantu

who were already on the ground were compelled to live in certain specified localities. All raiding was severely punished ; and a Kafir chief who made himself obnoxious in the south was visited by a commando of burghers and punished with the greatest severity. In England, on the other hand, a directly opposite opinion prevailed. Very little was known of the cruelties committed by Tshaka, Dingaan, and Moselekatse ; and in all government dealings with South Africa the civilization and improvement of the coloured races was made an object of the first importance, though it is probable that the measures adopted were not always the wisest or best that might have been devised.

The conduct of the Boers was therefore extremely offensive to the Imperial Government, whose views were reflected by the officials at the Cape ; and when news of the severe punishment of the offending chief reached Cape Town, Sir George Napier, the governor of the colony, sent a British force to protect the natives. A camp was formed near the frontier, but no further steps were taken until the Volksraad, which calmly pursued its own course, regardless of British opinion, forced some Zulus, who had attempted to settle in the republic, to remove to a district set apart for them in the south. This was construed by the Cape authorities as not only an undue interference with peaceably disposed natives, but an insult to the government ; and Captain Smith, with a force of about two hundred and sixty men, was ordered to cross the frontier. The Volksraad remonstrated, and as their protest was disregarded, Pretorius called out the burghers, and issued an ultimatum requiring the British troops to withdraw, and claiming perfect liberty for the republic. To this

Captain Smith replied that his government considered that the Boers were British subjects, and he forthwith arranged to make a night attack on Port Natal.

His plans were not well made. A moonlight night was selected for the undertaking, and he entirely overlooked the probability that the Boers would get wind of his intentions and arrange for the defence of Port Natal. The British camp was about three miles from the town, and the road, which lay along the shore, was skirted for part of the distance by thick bush. It was an ideal place for an ambush; but Smith took no precautions, and the troops marched carelessly, accompanied by a couple of field guns drawn by oxen. Pretorius, however, had taken a leaf out of the Zulu's book, and had posted his men in the scrub above the road. As the British passed the spot where they were hidden a shower of bullets rattled among the men, who attempted to return the fire; but no Boers were visible, and most if not all of the shots fell harmlessly into the scrub.

Again the Boers fired; and this time the oxen, frightened by the noise and maddened by wounds, broke loose from the guns and dashed wildly among the men. Very soon the utmost confusion prevailed, and Smith had no choice but to retreat, leaving behind him forty-one men killed and wounded, while three others were drowned in the bay. The guns, too, had to be abandoned; and they, with the oxen and spare ammunition, fell into the hands of the Dutch.

Again the Boers demanded the withdrawal of the troops; and Smith, though he had no intention of retiring, asked for a few days to consider the matter, suggesting that meanwhile both parties should observe a truce. To this Pretorius agreed, and Smith took the

opportunity of sending off a messenger named Richard King, with orders to ride with all speed to Grahams-town for reinforcements. King did his work well, and travelling at his utmost speed, he passed through Kafirland without interference from the natives, and reached Grahamstown ten days after he left Smith's camp.

Meanwhile, the truce had come to an end, and the Boers opened fire on the camp, which had been fortified with trenches and earthworks. Provisions, however, were scarce; and as no further supply was obtainable, Smith had the horses killed and their flesh dried. Water was plentiful, for wells had been sunk inside the camp; and as there was a fair supply of ammunition, the captain hoped to be able to hold out until the reinforcements arrived.

The Boers, on the other hand, though they had plenty of food, were badly off for ammunition for their cannon, and they were reduced to cutting up a chain cable to give solidity to lead cannon balls which they cast for themselves. With these and their rifles they kept up a steady fire; but though the garrison suffered from famine, the scarcity of provisions was their worst trouble, for Smith's improvised fortifications were so effectual that only sixteen men were killed and wounded during the siege. Day after day passed slowly, but Lieutenant-Colonel Cloet, with a strong reinforcement, was on the way; and on the twenty-sixth day of the siege a schooner and a frigate, both crowded with men, appeared in the bay. As they entered the harbour the Boers fired upon them and killed several men; but the frigate replied, and regardless of the fire from the shore the troops landed. As the

British force now in the country was too strong to be resisted with the smallest chance of success, the burghers speedily dispersed to their homes, and the Imperial Government took partial possession of Natal. Captain Smith, who was raised to the rank of major, was appointed military commandant, though the Volksraad still managed the general civil affairs of the territory.

Under this composite government rubs were inevitable, for the British supported the natives, and the Boers detested them. Panda was about this time recognized by the British as an independent sovereign; but his rule had become intolerable to many of his subjects, and they came by thousands to settle in Natal. The Boers mistrusted them, but under the government of Major Smith they were unable either to turn them out of the country or to force them to live in locations set apart for them. Many of the burghers, therefore, trekked back over the steep passes of the Drakenberg, and took up their abode in the district near the Vaal, which had formerly been occupied by Potgieter and his band. Thence they spread over the country, and some of them founded the town of Lydenburg.

The emigrant Boers were regarded by the Imperial Government as recalcitrant British subjects, and it was considered desirable to compel them to return to the colony. This, however, could not well be done by forcible means; and it was suggested that, if they could be cut off from intercourse with the outer world, and prevented from receiving reinforcements from their friends still resident in British territory, they would probably return of their own accord. With this end in view the government opened negotiations with the

Basuto chief Moshesh, who had his headquarters at Thaba Bosigo; with Adam Kok, the captain of a band of Griquas, whose country lay west of Basutoland; and with Faku, the chief of the Pondo tribes, who inhabited a strip of land between the Drakenbergs and the sea. In each case a treaty was concluded, by which the chief was raised to the position of a sovereign, not only over his own people, but over any European who settled in the country assigned to the tribe. Each sovereign, moreover, was to receive a trifling subsidy from the Cape government, with whom it would therefore be to his interest to keep on good terms.

The new sovereigns were perfectly satisfied with the arrangement, but their European subjects declined to recognize their authority. In the Griqua territory they took up arms to defend themselves against Kok's assumptions, and Sir Peregrine Maitland, who had succeeded Sir George Napier, sent a force to support the puppet king. Most of the Boers were captured by strategy, but they could not well be punished; and though they were required to take an oath of allegiance to the Queen, it was impossible to compel them to do so, and those who declined were allowed to leave Kok's territory and remove to Winburg.

After this it was found necessary to modify the arrangements of the treaty states, which, so far as their original object was concerned, had proved a complete failure. Sir Peregrine suggested, therefore, that the white people, though nominally remaining under the rule of Moshesh and Adam Kok, should practically be placed under British government, and should be located on new farms in districts separate from those

occupied by the Griquas and the Basuto. All that was to be required of them was the payment of a fixed rent on their farms, one part of which was to be handed to the respective kings, and the other to be applied to the payment of British officials appointed to carry on the government.

Meanwhile, Cape Colony itself was prospering. The public debt was reduced, new churches and schools were built, additional magistrates were appointed, and, which was no less important, good roads were constructed under the able administration of Mr. John Montagu, the colonial secretary. A remarkable piece of engineering was the improvement of the Cradock's Kloof Pass, which until 1844 was a mere ledge winding up the side of a steep and very rugged mountain. As the only available route lay along the brink of a tremendous precipice, the road was extremely dangerous, and it was very rarely that a wagon passed over it without losing some part of its equipment. Very often it was found necessary not only to unload the wagons, but to take the vehicles themselves to pieces and carry them piecemeal up the pass. When this was not done, the utmost exertions of twenty or thirty oxen, assisted by half a dozen men hauling with all their might on ropes attached to the wagon, barely succeeded in preventing it from overbalancing itself and rolling down the precipice. Worse still were the sufferings entailed on the oxen, which were often terribly cut about by the sjamboks, or long whips, of the Hottentot drivers. It was by no means uncommon for one or more of the poor creatures to die of sheer fatigue; and though the distance was only five and a half miles, wagons frequently occupied three days in

crossing the pass. But when the new road, which was named after Mr. Montagu, was opened in 1847, all these difficulties were removed; wagons were able to cross in an hour. And the improvement in this and other roads worked such a change in the vehicles in use in the colony that a wagon-maker in George remarked that since the opening of the Montagu Pass he had more orders for spring vehicles than he could carry out in five years.

A scarcely less wonderful piece of work was the construction of the Bain's Kloof Road, named after Mr. Bain, the inspector of roads, who planned it. The road for about six miles was scarped out of the face of an almost perpendicular rock, parts of which in its natural condition scarcely afforded foothold for a baboon. One huge rock barrier after another was removed by blasting, bridges and retaining walls were built in sundry places, but when at last the road was finished it reduced the distance from Cape Town to the Warm Bokke Veld by about one third.

The improvements attracted an increasing number of British settlers to the colony, and thus by degrees a great deal of the country left vacant by the emigrant Boers was taken up. At the same time British cruisers were constantly employed in chasing and capturing slave ships; and as it was impossible to return the rescued slaves to their homes, they were landed wholesale in Cape Colony. There they were gladly welcomed by the colonists, who were in need of servants; and as time went on they became absorbed into the various coloured races already on the ground.

But while the colony in general was improving, the eastern district, which was principally inhabited by the

English settlers who had come out in 1820, was suffering grievously from the incursions of the Xosas, who inhabited the territory beyond the Keiskama. They were perpetually making raids over the border, and since they had been relieved from British rule they had committed more than a hundred murders in the colony, had burned a number of farms, and carried off innumerable cattle. At last their conduct became unendurable, and in 1846 they filled the cup of their offences by killing a Hottentot constable who had arrested one of their countrymen for stealing. Sandile, who had succeeded Gaika as chief, refused to hand over the offenders to justice, and a force was sent into his territory with the purpose of reducing him to order.

But, as usual, the officers in command underrated the ability of the native warriors. The force was accompanied by a long baggage train of ox-wagons laden with ammunition and stores; but no special trouble was taken to guard it, and it fell a prey to the Xosas, who swooped down upon it when the main column was at a distance. The loss of the stores compelled the army to retire; while the Xosas, encouraged by their success, hovered round the column and inflicted considerable damage. The harassed troops at length reached a large stone schoolhouse close to the frontier, and there they took refuge; while the Xosas, throwing off all restraint, rushed over the border and destroyed or carried off everything which came in their way. They were joined by a strong force of Tembus, and the two bands of warriors marched in different directions, laying waste the country, so that in the course of a few weeks, except in towns and laagers, not a single

European was to be found in the eastern part of the colony.

The capture of the baggage train had reduced the troops to serious difficulties. Provisions and ammunition were equally scarce, and a second baggage train was hurriedly dispatched from Grahamstown. This time the wagons were provided with what was supposed to be sufficient escort, but while they were passing through some dense bush the Xosas again fell upon the soldiers, and after a sharp fight triumphantly made off with the wagons. Matters were becoming serious, and as there were not sufficient troops available, the burghers were called out, and a number of coloured people of various races were pressed into the service, while wagons and oxen were obtained from every possible quarter. It was less easy, however, to procure provisions, and the difficulty was increased by the necessity of feeding the Europeans and Hottentots who had been driven from their homes by the invaders.

For some time the war dragged its length along with varying success, but owing to the scarcity of supplies it was found impossible to take the troops far into the country. More regiments were then ordered to the Cape, and a supply of provisions was sent in from distant parts of the colony, while at the same time the arrangements for transport were rearranged in a more effective way. On this Sandile asked for peace; but though he pretended to submit, it became apparent that his real object was to gain time to gather in the harvest; for when this was done the Xosas again went on the warpath. This time the British troops gained a decided advantage, and Sandile

once more humbly professed penitence. He was again believed by the government, and the war came to an end without any satisfactory results having been attained.

About this time Sir Harry Smith was appointed governor, and his energetic measures soon brought about a somewhat better state of affairs. His first step was to take possession of the Xosa territory, and to proclaim it a British province under the title of British Kaffraria. Several forts were built and strongly garrisoned. But the chiefs still retained a good deal of power, and colonists were not allowed to settle in the country, which was reserved exclusively for the Xosas. Whatever view Sandile may have taken of the change, the people in general were certainly better off than when under the rule of their own chiefs, for various bad customs were abolished, and life was safer than in former times.

Having made these arrangements, which gave general satisfaction, Sir Harry went northward to meet Moshesh, Adam Kok, and the malcontent Boer leaders. Mr. Pretorius and a number of his followers had at that time just determined to move their quarters again and trek with all their possessions across the Vaal. In fact, they were actually on the march when Sir Harry met them; and having listened to the tale of their grievances, he cordially invited them to come back to Natal. They had, however, no desire to return to British territory, and decided to found a new settlement beyond the Vaal.

Sir Harry then interviewed the Griqua and Basuto kings. Both were, so to speak, pensioned off from sovereignty; and a considerable tract of country,

bounded by the Orange River on the south, the Kwathlamba Mountains on the east, and the Vaal River on the north and west, was added to the British territory as the Orange River Sovereignty. Officers were appointed to carry on the government, and while the native tribes resident in the country still remained under the rule of their respective chiefs, all white people of whatever nationality were declared to be under the direct government of the Queen. The arrangement, if made earlier, might have led to good results; but the Boers had become thoroughly dissatisfied, and they liked the direct rule of the Queen of England very little better than that of the colonial officials. Accordingly, very soon after Sir Harry Smith had returned to Cape Town, they rose in arms to assert their independence, marched to Bloemfontein, the seat of government, and having captured all the British officials, conducted them across the Orange River and sent them about their business. On this Sir Harry immediately sent a force to restore order, and on August 29, 1848, Pretorius and his burghers were totally defeated at Boomplaats, near the Orange River.

The reverse brought the rebellion to an abrupt termination. The discomfited Boers hurriedly retired across the Vaal, and British rule was established on a firmer basis than before the revolt.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONVICTS AND KAFIRS.

THE nineteenth of September 1849 is a memorable day in the annals of Cape Colony. Earlier in the year the Home Government expressed an intention of transporting convicts to the Cape of Good Hope, where, for road-making and other public works, as well as on the farms, additional labourers were urgently required. The colonists, however, strongly objected to the proposed solution of the difficulty, and they pointed out that, owing to the nature of the population, the introduction of a large number of criminals was particularly undesirable. An anti-convict association was formed, the members of which bound themselves to resist by every means in their power the distribution of convicts through the country, and they went so far as to arrange to boycott everybody who might take any part whatever in "landing, supplying, or employing convicts."

But the colonial protests were ignored by the Home Government, and on the nineteenth of September the *Neptune*, with the first batch of convicts on board, dropped anchor in Simon's Bay. When the news reached Cape Town excitement rose to the highest pitch, and a sort of panic spread over the whole pop-

ulation. The church bells were tolled ; anti-convict meetings were held in all parts of the town ; and a municipal board wrote to Sir Harry Smith to inform him that "the people have determined that the convicts must not, cannot, and shall not be landed, or be kept in any of the ports of the colony." The letter went on to beg his Excellency to refuse to allow the convicts to be landed, and to give orders that when the *Neptune* had been revictualled she should at once leave the Cape with her human freight.

Sir Harry Smith was entirely in accord with the colonists in the matter. He had already declined to receive the consignment of the *Neptune*, had refused to allow her to pass the custom-house, and had directed that she should be transferred to the charge of the naval authorities at Simon's Town. More than this he was unable to do ; for, as an officer of the Crown, he could not send the vessel elsewhere, nor otherwise actively oppose his superiors. He could, however, resist passively, and he pledged his honour to the executive council that, rather than take any part in the landing of the convicts, he would resign his post as governor.

Sir Harry's promise partly allayed the agitation, but the majority of the colonists were still unappeased. No one would supply provisions for the convict ship, and during the whole of the time that the *Neptune* lay at Simon's Bay the unfortunate people on board had to depend entirely on supplies obtained from the ships on the station. So strong was the feeling against the government that the boycott was partially extended to the garrison, and it became no easy matter to obtain provisions for the troops.

Matters remained in this state for five months, and as Sir Harry Smith could neither force the colonists to receive the convicts nor order the ship to proceed elsewhere, it was necessary to wait until orders came from England. At that time telegraphic communication between the two countries did not exist, and there was, therefore, no choice but to wait patiently for the answer, which, when at length it arrived, was favourable to the colonists, for the *Neptune* was ordered to go on to Tasmania.

The convict question had not long been settled when fresh trouble broke out in Kaffraria. The new regulations were not agreeable to the natives, and that, perhaps, to which they most objected was the prohibition of the ceremony of "smelling out" witches. All the Bantu tribes were exceedingly superstitious; their religion mainly consisted in a belief in witchcraft, and the witch doctors were the most powerful people in the country.

Every misfortune that happened to a tribe or to an individual was supposed to be due to witchcraft, and when anything went wrong the witch was "smelt out" by the "izanusi," or witch doctors, and put to death. The ceremony was a ghastly one, for the "izanusi," having attired themselves for the occasion in all the horrible paraphernalia of their office—bones, skins, and the entrails of animals recently slain—rushed madly round the assembled people until they selected somebody, and pointed out the unfortunate wretch as the cause of the mischief. There was no appeal from the decree, and few who were thus "smelt out" escaped instant death at the hands of the king's slayers.

The government had naturally supposed that the

Kafirs would be glad to be relieved from the unwelcome attentions of the witch doctors, but as they still believed that any sickness or misfortune that befell them was due to witchcraft, the decree which abolished "smelling out," in their opinion, deprived them of every means of defence. It was therefore very objectionable to them, and when Umlanjeni, a witch doctor, who was reputed to have wonderful powers, issued charms which would, he declared, render their wearers invincible and turn the white men's bullets into water, they were quite ready to go to war again. Meetings were held secretly, and as the people were stirred up to greater excitement, cattle-lifting from the frontier farms became a frequent occurrence. War was evidently in the air, and many Kafir servants were so far loyal to their white masters that they warned them "to flee as fast and as far as they could," because very soon a deadly conflict would break out.

The frontiersmen sent news of the impending disturbance to Sir Harry Smith at Cape Town; and in October 1850 the governor went round by sea to Buffalo Mouth, and hurried up to King William's Town, where he called a meeting of the chiefs. Sandile refused to appear, but several others attended, and spoke in such a friendly manner that Sir Harry returned to the Cape fully convinced that, notwithstanding the recent raids, the Kafirs had in reality no warlike intentions. But he had only been a fortnight at Cape Town when he was hurriedly recalled to King William's Town, and immediately on his arrival found it necessary to call out the burghers, and request all the loyal inhabitants of

the frontier to enlist as volunteers. The appeal met with a warm response, and the Grahamstown people even offered to take over the routine duties of the garrison, in order that all the regular troops might be sent to the front.

The Kafirs, meanwhile, were also preparing for war. They had learned by this time that the assegai, however valuable it might be for hand-to-hand fighting, was practically useless as an offensive weapon against troops armed with rifles. Some of them had obtained firearms by one means or another, and those who were still unprovided proceeded to make up the deficiency by raiding every farmhouse within a convenient distance of the frontier, and carrying off whatever guns, powder, and shot they could find.

On the fourteenth of December the British advance began, and Sir Harry Smith marched with the troops to Fort Cox, which occupied a rugged hill in a bush-covered valley watered by the Keiskama. The valley itself was richly fertile; in fact, the vegetation was so dense that any number of men could easily hide without a chance of being discovered, while the hill on which the fort was built was so rocky and barren that it afforded little or no cover. It was impossible to grow anything near the fort, and in time of war the garrison had to depend entirely on its own stores, for no supplies could be obtained from the outside.

The first skirmish of the war took place on the twenty-fourth of December. The troops were marching through a rocky gorge formed by the Keiskama, and at a place where the path was so narrow that they could only advance in single file, the Kafirs suddenly opened fire upon them, and before they could be dis-

lodged, a number of men were killed and wounded. The next day the Xosas carried the war over the frontier, and destroyed three villages, killing at the same time forty-six of the inhabitants.

War had now begun in earnest, and before the end of the month the greater part of the Kafir police had joined their countrymen, taking with them rifles and ammunition whenever they could manage to do so. Then followed the investment of Fort Cox; and on January 1, 1851, Colonel Somerset, who was in charge of the left column at Fort Hare, sent his son with a detachment of the Cape Mounted Rifles to escort a drove of oxen to the fort. This seemed to be the most convenient mode of sending in provisions; but the Kafirs were on the lookout, and appeared in such overwhelming numbers that Captain Somerset was compelled to retire. A second attempt to relieve the fort also proved a failure; and then the governor, with two hundred and fifty of the Cape Mounted Rifles, whose uniform he wore for the occasion, made a dash for liberty. The whole country was swarming with armed Kafirs, who kept up a desultory fire; but riding at headlong speed, the party contrived to pass through the enemy, and after a hazardous race for life, arrived safely at King William's Town.

Mr. Montagu, who, in the absence of the governor, was at the head of affairs in Cape Town, now threw all his energy into the work of raising recruits and providing clothing, arms, and other necessary equipments. Before the middle of January more than twelve hundred volunteers were on their way to King William's Town, and as troops were also sent from England, in the course of a few weeks the strongest force which

had ever been employed in South Africa was engaged in fighting the Kafirs.

But the enemy was stubborn, and for two years a sort of guerilla war dragged its length along. Many villages were destroyed, and numbers of men were killed, but no pitched battle was fought; and one of the most notable events connected with the war was the wreck of the troopship *Birkenhead*, which struck on a rock in Algoa Bay early in the morning of February 26, 1852. From the first moment it was clear that there was no hope of saving the ship, and the water rushed in so fast that many of the soldiers who were sleeping on the lower deck were drowned. Others managed to spring to the upper decks, and when the officers had formed them up in lines and companies, the brave fellows stood calmly while the boats were got out, and the women and children took their places. Some of the soldiers, meanwhile, brought up the horses and threw them overboard, for the ship was not far from land, and though sharks abounded, it was possible that some of the poor animals might escape.

By the time the boats were filled the ship was sinking fast, and every man could see that there was not a chance of the boats being able to reach the shore and return before she went down. Still, not a man stirred, though as the boats pulled off the ship broke in two, and the forepart sank, taking down one boat with it. All hope that the *Birkenhead* could keep afloat even for a few minutes was then at an end, and the captain told the soldiers to jump for their lives and try to reach the boats. Some of their own officers pointed out that, as the boats were already overcrowded, by doing so they would take away the last chance of

life from those already in the boats, and only one or two jumped. The rest stood motionless, and waited for the ship to go down. As she sank, some struck out, and by swimming and clinging to pieces of wreckage managed to reach the shore, but at least four hundred men went down with the ship.

“The brave who died,
Died without flinching in the bloody surf;
They sleep as well, beneath that purple tide,
As others under turf.”

A few weeks after the outbreak of the Kafir War disturbances began in the Orange River Sovereignty. The outbreak was carefully planned by Moshesh, who, while he pretended to be extremely friendly, was secretly intensely annoyed at losing the power which the English had originally conferred upon him. Major Warden, the governor of the province, interfered to restore order; and when words failed he marched with a strong force against the offending Basuto. Having fallen into the usual error of underrating the enemy, he was totally defeated in the first battle; and on this Moshesh laid aside all pretence of friendship, while a number of Boers, who were at heart opposed to the British Government, took sides with the Basuto. It seemed, indeed, a favourable time for a revolt, for the governor of Cape Colony had his hands full in British Kaffraria, and it was well known that there was no force available for service in the Orange River Sovereignty.

Accordingly, Moshesh and the disaffected Boers wrote a joint letter to Mr. Pretorius, who was living in the newly-settled territory beyond the Vaal, and invited him to come back and organize a revolution. After the battle of Boomplaats the government had set a

price of £2,000 upon his head, and though perfectly aware of the fact, he sent a letter to Major Warden, suggesting that in the interests of peace Great Britain should acknowledge the independence of the country north of the Vaal, otherwise he should certainly accept his countrymen's invitation. This communication was immediately forwarded to Sir Harry Smith, and though the proposal which it contained was humiliating, acquiescence was unavoidable; for since no troops could be spared from Kaffraria, the garrisons in the Sovereignty had little chance of making headway if the Boers and Basuto combined against them. Consequently, a meeting was held, and on January 17, 1852, the Sand River Convention was signed. By it the British Government formally renounced all rights of sovereignty over the Dutch settlers inhabiting the land north of the Vaal, and the independence of the South African Republic, as the territory was called, was formally acknowledged.

This was almost Sir Harry Smith's last official act at the Cape, for at the end of March 1852 he was superseded by Sir George Cathcart, who forthwith turned his attention to the affairs of British Kaffraria. The long war had exhausted the tribes, and both the Xosas and the Tembus were beginning to wish for peace. Their overtures were willingly accepted, and arrangements were made by which it was hoped order would be effectually preserved.

Meanwhile, though the Boers of the South African Republic were pacified, the Basuto still continued to harass settlers and plunder their farms. The troops under Major Warden's command were unable to repress the outbreak, and when peace was concluded

in Kaffraria, Sir George Cathcart, with a strong force, entered the Sovereignty, and demanded the immediate submission of the Basuto. Three days were allowed for compliance with the terms, and it was further demanded that at the end of that time one thousand horses and ten thousand cattle should be handed over to the British as a war indemnity.

The three days passed, but no submission was made, though Moshesh sent in a herd of three thousand five hundred cattle, hoping that this might be accepted as sufficient, though he probably felt doubtful about it, as, at the same time, he called his warriors together at Thaba Bosigo. The government had at last learned that it was useless to accept compromises from the natives, and on December 20, 1852, the troops advanced in three columns, commanded respectively by Sir George Cathcart and Colonels Eyre and Napier. On the Berea Plateau, which lay between the camp and Thaba Bosigo, Colonel Napier's men caught sight of a number of cattle, left, probably, for the express purpose of attracting them. They went in pursuit, but on the way back, having become entangled in the rocks, and separated, they were attacked by the Basuto, who killed twenty-seven lancers, and appropriated their arms and uniforms. Meanwhile, Colonel Eyre and his men had also captured a number of cattle, and were driving their booty before them, when some men dressed as lancers were seen approaching. They were in reality at the head of a party of Basuto, but before the fact was discovered several men were captured. The column had to fight its way through the enemy, but Eyre succeeded in keeping his cattle, and eventually joined Sir George Cathcart, who was engaged by an impi of

mounted Basuto. The battle continued far into the evening, but at length the enemy retired, and the troops passed a quiet night. In the morning the Basuto had disappeared, and Sir George returned to camp to rest his men before renewing the attack.

Moshesh had the wisdom to see that, though he was practically victorious, in the long run he could not hope to conquer, and he decided to make terms while the advantage was still on his side. He had always welcomed missionaries into his country, and he asked one of them to help him to draw up a suitable letter to the governor. "Your Excellency," it ran, "this day you have fought against my people and taken much cattle. I beg you will be satisfied with what you have taken. I entreat peace from you. You have chastised. Let it be enough, I pray you; and let me be no longer considered an enemy to the Queen. I will try all I can to keep my people in order in the future."

The tardily-offered submission was willingly accepted, and in due course a reply was conveyed to Moshesh informing him that, in consideration of his apology, Sir George would waive his claim to the rest of the cattle and horses originally demanded. Peace was thus concluded, and before the end of the year the force returned to Cape Colony.

The Imperial Government had become almost tired of the incessant disturbances from which one portion or another of South Africa was never free. The tidings of the Basuto outbreak added the last drop to the cup, and it was decided that the Orange River Sovereignty should be abandoned. Sir George Cathcart was directed to hand over the government of the territory to a representative body elected by the

colonists, but when the representatives assembled to meet him they protested vigorously against the decision of the government. The malcontents had all retired to the South African Republic, and the Europeans in the Sovereignty were unanimous in their desire to remain citizens of the British Empire. But if this could not be, they requested that the government would at any rate send a force to bring Moshesh to order before abandoning the country, for the chief had apparently forgotten to keep his people in order, and the Basuto were again fighting among themselves. But the requests and representations of the colonists were alike disregarded, and on February 23, 1854, a convention signed at Bloemfontein converted the Orange River Sovereignty into the independent republic of the Orange Free State.

Before this came to pass, a scarcely less important change had been made in the government of Cape Colony, which, up to that time, had been carried on entirely by officers who were appointed in England, and had very little independent power. The colonists themselves were allowed no share in the government, but on March 11, 1853, an Order in Council swept away the old order of things with one stroke of the pen. It is true that the governor and most of the ministers were still appointed by the Home Government, but they were thenceforward to be assisted by a parliament consisting of two chambers elected by the people. The first meeting of the Cape Parliament took place in June 1854, and from that day no arbitrary decrees could be imposed on the colonists, since before any measure became law it was necessary that it should pass both houses, and receive also the approval of the governor.

CHAPTER IX.

KAFFRARIA AND THE FREE STATE.

SIR GEORGE CATHCART'S scheme for the government of British Kaffraria did not prove wholly satisfactory. Too much power had been left in the hands of the chief; and Sir George Grey, who became governor of Cape Colony, in 1854, found it necessary to make some alterations. The recent wars had left the Ama-Xosa poor, and as they naturally wished to improve their condition, Sir George Grey proposed to Kveli and the other chiefs of the tribe that, instead of continuing to levy fines and confiscate the property of those accused of witchcraft or other offences, they should accept a subsidy, to be paid monthly by the British authorities. In return for this, though they were still nominally to try offenders, the law was really to be administered by European officers, and all fines were to be paid to the government. To this the chiefs agreed, and Sir George obtained annual grants of money both from the Imperial and Cape Parliaments with which to carry on his reforms. A hospital for sick natives was built in King William's Town, roads were constructed, and the missionaries received grants in aid of various industrial institutions, in which young natives were educated and taught a variety of useful trades.

But scarcely were the new arrangements in full swing when fresh trouble began in Kaffraria. It was believed that the disturbance originated in a deep-laid scheme of Kreli, who hated the English rule, and desired to restore the former power of his race. If this was the case, Kreli made his plans so well that he never appeared at all in the matter, and the working of the plot was carried out by other hands. The first mover in the matter was Nongkause, the niece of Umhlakaza, a powerful witch doctor, who professed to have been accosted by some remarkable-looking strangers when she went to fetch water from the spring one morning in the early part of 1856.

She told her uncle of the adventure, and he in turn went to see the strangers, who, he said, made some wonderful revelations to him. They refused, however, to give him full information on that occasion, and directed him to sacrifice an ox, perform other ceremonies, and in four days' time to come again to the same place. Umhlakaza did as he was told, and this time he saw among the strangers some one whom he believed to be his brother, who had been dead many years. Being then assured of the supernatural nature of his visitors, who professed to be friends of the black races who had come to help them to drive the white men out of the country, Umhlakaza believed all they said. At their bidding he proclaimed to the Ama-Xosa race that new and wonderful things would be done in the land, but that they must prepare the way by giving up witchcraft, killing their cattle, and feasting on the meat.

The new doctrine soon reached Kreli, and his "word" that the best cattle were to be slain went

through the land. Sandile was the only chief who hung back from obedience, for he could not see the advantage of the new doctrine, and he was backed up by the British Commissioner, who told Kreli that, though he could do as he liked in his own country, he was not to interfere with Sandile and other chiefs, who held land under the British.

Kreli, however, took little notice of the admonition. Nongkause continued to see visions, and over and over again the word went through the country that the best of the remaining cattle were to be killed and eaten. At length even Sandile gave way, and his section of the tribe began diligently to kill off their cattle. After the destruction had been going on for some time, and when the flocks and herds of the Ama-Xosa had nearly reached vanishing point, the final order went forth. Every animal left in the kraals was to be killed; and because that was not enough, every mealie and grain of millet in the storehouses must be destroyed.

It was an order that might well stagger the most obedient, but it was accompanied by a promise of good things to come which fairly dazzled the simple-minded Xosas. A glorious future—so said the spirits—was at hand for those who were obedient, and who without reserve sacrificed all they had. Vast herds of cattle of unearthly beauty should suddenly appear in the kraals; magnificent corn, ripe and ready for the sickle, should spring in full perfection from the earth; and the ancient warriors of the race should come back and drive out the white invaders. These wonders were to be the beginning of a golden age, in which no one should ever be sick or sorry, and no one should grow old, for the dead were to be restored to life, and

the living were not to die. But on those who were disobedient to the decree of the spirits trouble and sorrow should inevitably fall. They should be cut off with the white men, and have neither part nor lot in the new glory of the race.

The announcement worked up the already excited Xosas into a state of frenzy, and in spite of all that the missionaries and the officials could do to stop them, they set to work to kill and destroy everything that they possessed. Some few, it is true, did not believe the wonderful promises made by Umhlakaza on behalf of the spirits with whom he professed to be in communication; but even if they did not believe the prophecy, they obeyed the commands of the chief. In either case the result was the same. And while new kraals were being built for the accommodation of the expected herds, and huge skin-bags were being constructed to contain the milk, many of the people were famishing.

The end was at hand; and early in 1857 it was proclaimed that on a certain day the promised wonders would come to pass. By that time the land lay desolate; but though the people were starving, as the hours of the last night wore on the nation went mad with joy and hope. Present suffering was forgotten, for they firmly believed that at the next sunrise the sky would fall on the hated Europeans and Fingos, while at the same time their own kraals and fields would be filled, and a new and glorious life would begin.

But as the sun rose their hopes sank, for they looked in vain for the promised wonders. Could it be at mid-day or in the evening that the miracle was to be worked? But the day wore on, and the sun shone brightly, and no wonders appeared in the heavens or in the earth.

The only change was in themselves, and as they grew weaker and more weary, they knew they had been deceived.

If Kreli's plan was to drive the Xosas to desperation, and force them to overrun the colony and eat up the white men, he had defeated his own ends, for the people were scattered broadcast over the country, and were too faint and weak with hunger to have any spirit left for fighting. All they wanted was food, and in one wild, half-delirious stream they poured across the frontier, fighting and struggling with one another if a scrap of anything eatable was seen, and rushing to the towns and farms to beg for the help which was never refused them even by those who had suffered by their former raids.

But the destruction and desolation were too widespread for all to obtain relief. Many, especially in the Transkei region, were unable to reach any place where food was to be obtained, and though the government had done what it could to meet the crisis by establishing special storehouses in King William's Town, thousands of people perished. So widespread was the destruction that a great part of Kaffraria became practically uninhabited, and farms were allotted to any settlers from Cape Colony who chose to take up the ground.

About the same time a German legion which had been raised by the British during the Crimean War was disbanded, and men and officers were invited to settle in Kaffraria, where land was given to them. Few cared for the life, and as most of them did not remain long on their farms, Sir George Grey arranged with a Hamburg merchant to send out a large party

of emigrants from North Germany. Almost all these people were accustomed to agricultural work, and in the course of a few years most of them had not only repaid the money advanced to them by government for their passages and for the land that was assigned to them, but had become prosperous farmers or market gardeners.

Still, the affairs of British Kaffraria did not stand on a wholly satisfactory basis, for though the province was governed by the Cape laws, it was not represented in the parliament, which had in reality no right to legislate for it. Moreover, the Kaffraria revenue was so scanty that the government could not be carried on without the aid of grants from the imperial treasury; and as the best way out of the difficulty, Sir Philip Wodehouse, who became governor of the Cape in 1862, proposed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies that British Kaffraria should be united to Cape Colony by an act of the Imperial Parliament. The measure was unpopular to all the colonists, for the Kaffrarians wished to retain their independence, and the Cape people considered that their constitutional rights were invaded; but opposition notwithstanding, the measure was carried, and in 1865 British Kaffraria was incorporated into Cape Colony.

The burghers of the Orange Free State, in the meantime, were busily engaged in building up the constitution of their newly-formed republic. The supreme power of legislation was centred in the Volksraad, while the president, whose principal duty was to carry out its decrees, was assisted in his work by an executive council. The president and the members of the Volksraad were elected respectively for terms

of five and four years, and the right of voting was not confined to Europeans, but was extended also to civilized coloured men who were considered by the Volksraad to be fit for the privilege.

The first trouble of the new republic was caused by the Basuto, who were not wholly agreeable neighbours. Moshesh was anxious to reclaim all the country laid waste by the Matabele, and even if he could not obtain that, he was quite determined to have all that had been assigned to him by Sir George Napier's treaty. The Free State government saw the matter in a different light, and was not at all disposed to admit a claim which would deprive them of a considerable extent of country. Relations between the two races soon became strained, and the Basuto began a series of raids on the farms of their neighbours. Being ill supplied with guns, Moshesh did not see his way to embark on open warfare, and he directed his men to take up their quarters in the mountains and caves, swooping down, as occasion might offer, on some isolated farm, and carrying off the cattle or grain.

At last the warriors, growing bolder, began to take possession of the farms themselves; and in 1858 the burghers, roused to desperation, carried the war into Basutoland. Moshesh, however, never gave them an opportunity of fighting a pitched battle, but his warriors skirmished round them, drawing them farther and farther from their own frontier, while at the same time another impi overran the Free State, plundering and destroying wherever it went. News of the invasion reached the burghers near Thaba Bosigo, and as a siege of that stronghold was apparently a hope-

less task, the commando dispersed and the men returned to defend their homes.

Mr. Boshof, the president of the Free State, had asked the South African Republic for help, but it was so long in coming that he requested Sir George Grey to act as mediator between the Free State and the Basuto. Moshesh signified his willingness to accept the mediation, and the result of the proceedings was a readjustment of the frontier, which gave a considerable addition of territory to Moshesh, while the Free State only received an outlying mission station which had formerly been more than half independent of the Basuto chief.

Mr. Boshof was succeeded in the presidency by the son of Commandant-General Pretorius, under whose rule the Free State increased in prosperity. It also extended its territory, for Adam Kok sold his rights to the republic, and the Griquas, having disposed of their farms to European settlers, moved bodily to a district given them by Sir George Grey on the south of Natal. But Moshesh was still turbulent. He seized the country on the north bank of the Caledon River, and declined to recognize the boundary assigned by Sir George Grey. Many of his people took possession of land in the Free State, and Advocate Brand, who succeeded Mr. Pretorius in 1865, begged Sir Philip Wodehouse to readjust the boundary line. Moshesh agreed to the plan, but when Sir Philip gave his decision, and required Moshesh to recall his people who had settled in the Free State, the Basuto refused to obey, and the burghers took up arms to compel them to do so.

This was a signal for a fresh series of outrages, for the tribe that poured into the Free State plundered

and destroyed the farms, and murdered all the whites who fell into their hands. But they did not by any means have things all their own way, for some of their strongholds were captured, and their impis were several times defeated by the burghers. Moshesh at last expressed a wish for peace; but, as he afterwards admitted, he only wanted time to plant his fields and gather in his harvest, and in the course of a few months the war broke out more fiercely than before.

The great Basuto chief was, however, growing old, and could no longer fight as he had formerly done. The result was that the burghers gained victory after victory. The Basuto lost heart, and some of them retreated beyond the Drakenbergs. The destruction of the Basuto power seemed to be within measurable distance, and in despair Moshesh wrote to Sir Philip Wodehouse, begging that the tribe "might rest and live under the large folds of the flag of England before he was no more." His request was granted. In 1869 all the territory north and west of the Caledon River was assigned to the Free State, and Basutoland itself became part of the British Empire.

CHAPTER X.

NEW WEALTH.

WHILE the burghers of the Free State were fighting with the Basuto, Cape Colony was not in a very flourishing condition. Trade was bad; the vines had suffered severely from a species of blight; and long-continued drought had caused the death of innumerable sheep and cattle. Moreover, ostrich feathers, which had been a valuable export, became less plentiful; for as colonization increased, the wild birds and beasts retreated farther and farther inland. There seemed to be every prospect that the indiscriminate slaughter committed by both European and native hunters would, before many years had passed, exterminate the whole race of ostriches.

To avert the threatened loss, several farmers tried the experiment of keeping ostriches in captivity. When the birds were caught young, it was not difficult to tame them so that they would live in enclosures and allow their coveted plumes to be removed at the proper seasons. But for some time great difficulty was experienced in keeping up the supply, for though the ostriches would lay eggs, very few of the captive birds would hatch them. In 1869, however, it was discovered that ostrich eggs could be hatched in incubators.

This removed the principal obstacles, for it was not difficult to bring up the chicks by hand; and in the course of a few years numerous ostrich farms were established in different parts of the colony.

A still more important discovery was made in 1867 by a hunter named O'Reilly. On his way back to Cape Colony, after a trip upcountry, he chanced to halt for the night at the De Kalk Farm, on the bank of the Orange River. Some pretty stones collected by the children lay on the table, and one of the pebbles glittered and flashed back the light in such a remarkable way that Mr. O'Reilly asked his host to allow him to submit it to an expert. Permission was given, and the stone, after being shown to several people, was finally taken to Grahamstown, where it was pronounced to be a particularly fine diamond.

News of the find was noised abroad, and natives and Europeans began to look diligently for "stones." Little success at first attended their efforts, and the next lucky man was a Hottentot, who in 1869 picked up a large diamond, which he sold for £400. The buyer, however, did better still, for when he in turn disposed of the stone he received £10,000 for it.

This second find raised excitement to fever height, and people began to flock to the Orange River; but very few diamonds rewarded their efforts. The prospectors went farther and farther afield; and when it was whispered that diamonds had been found on the banks of the Vaal, thousands of eager searchers streamed northward. Then the rush was diverted from the Vaal to the sun-parched veldt, where the farms of Dutoitspan, Bultfontein, and Vooruitzigt, commonly called, after its owner, "De Beers," soon attracted

the diamond hunters. In many cases "stones" were discovered by the simple process of washing the gravel until all the earthy part had disappeared, leaving only pebbles, among which it was comparatively easy to detect the presence of a diamond.

Wagons, innocent of springs, were the only means of transport; and day after day the heavy vehicles lumbered along, through streams and across the veldt, to one or other of the newly-discovered diggings.

In 1870, diamonds were found between the Vaal and the Modder Rivers, and with mushroom-like rapidity the town of Kimberley sprang up. At first it was a mere collection of tents, where the dust lay ankle-deep in the unpaved roadways, where water was scarce and sanitary arrangements were unknown, though flies and every form of discomfort prevailed universally. But diamonds were abundant, and the spot where they were chiefly found soon became one huge mine divided out into "claims," held and worked by various individuals. At first the claims were separated by paths, but one after another the roadways collapsed, and the mine became one huge, open pit like a vast quarry.

Difficulty was then experienced in sending the diamond-bearing soil up to the surface to be washed. An ingenious arrangement of cables running from each claim to the edge of the mine was, however, found to answer perfectly, and buckets, full and empty, travelled unceasingly up and down the ropes, until the necessity of deepening the mine made a more complicated system imperative.

The discovery of diamonds instantly gave a new value to the strip of country in which the mines were situated. Up to that time it had been so lightly

esteemed that it was a sort of no man's land; but the diamond mines enhanced its value, and forthwith the British, the Griquas under Captain Waterboer, the Orange Free State, and the South African Republic all put in claims. After much discussion it was agreed that the matter should be referred to arbitration; and Mr. Keate, the governor of Natal, was entrusted with the duty of making the decision.

The Free State government sent no representative, and after carefully listening to the evidence offered by the other claimants, Mr. Keate gave judgment in favour of Waterboer, to whom he awarded a considerable tract of land which, up to that time, had been claimed by the South African Republic. The judgment was equivalent to declaring the district British property, and in 1871 Waterboer's territory was formally proclaimed a crown colony, under the title of Griqualand West. It afterwards appeared that Waterboer's title to the land was extremely defective; and as, for imperial reasons, it was considered necessary that Great Britain should remain in possession of the diamond mines, a grant of £90,000 was made to the Free State in full discharge of all claims.

CHAPTER XI.

BANTU AND BOER.

THE annexation of Natal by the British did not lead to a large immigration of European colonists. Both climate and soil offered every attraction, but the government policy with regard to the native tribes made white people shy of settling in the country, and colonization advanced but slowly. From the very first days of the British rule, Zulus, as well as members of other tribes who objected to Panda's somewhat severe rule, had been encouraged to take up their abode in Natal. No distinction was made between them; and Bantu, whose original homes were perhaps hundreds of miles away, were made welcome equally with the Zulus, who had held the land before the Boers trekked over the Drakenberg. To each and all land was assigned by the government.

So long as they abstained from "smelling out" witches and other objectionable practices, they were allowed to live in their own way; and under the beneficent British rule their numbers increased rapidly. Some few were converted by the missionaries, and, as time went on, fell into civilized ways; but they were exceptions, and most of the people continued to live after the

fashion of their forefathers. As a rule, they kept the peace both among themselves and towards the British; and with the view of averting disturbances, a law was passed that no man of Bantu race should own a gun of any description without obtaining a government license to do so. The same law did not prevail in other parts of South Africa, and Langelibalele, the chief of the Hlubi tribe, which many years before had been eaten up by Tshaka, encouraged his young men to find work on the diamond fields, with the view of obtaining guns. He did not, however, comply with the government regulation regarding the registration of the weapons; and when he was called to account he declined to take any action in the matter or to appear before the court at Maritzburg.

Finding that words were useless, the Natal government adopted stronger measures, and troops were sent to reduce the chief to order. But Langelibalele was not disposed to be coerced, and leaving the women and children to take care of the kraals, he and his warriors drove off the cattle into the mountains. Major Durnford, with a small escort, went in pursuit, and caught up the Hlubis in the Bushman's Pass; but as he had been ordered not to begin hostilities, he endeavoured to open communication with Langelibalele, who marched in front of his men. Instead of sending a message to the chief, the induna in command of the rearguard ordered his men to work round quietly, with the view of cutting off the British. Fortunately, the trick was discovered, and though five of Major Durnford's men were shot, the rest contrived to make their escape.

No one knew how far the dissatisfaction extended, but precautions were immediately taken against a fur-

ther outbreak, and the Boers from the South African Republic and the Orange Free State volunteered to help in restoring order. On this, the Hlubis marched over the mountains towards Basutoland, where they expected to obtain support; but the British overtook them and captured Langalibalele and several of his principal indunas. The rest of the impi attempted to fight, but was compelled to yield to superior force, and all the cattle were taken. These prompt measures put an end to the insurrection, and Langalibalele was banished to Robben Island.

In England it was considered that the punishment had been too severe, and when the matter came before the Imperial Parliament the sentence was practically reversed. Sir Benjamin Pine was recalled from the governorship of Natal, Langalibalele was brought back from Robben Island, and allowed the society of his wives, while compensation was awarded to several Hlubis who had been deprived of their cattle.

While the Bantu tribes were thus prospering under British rule, the Zulus, under King Panda, were in a no less flourishing condition. Panda had long been too stout to care to take any active part in the government, but his son, Cetewayo, who almost equalled Tshaka and Dingaan in genius, acted as regent, and kept the Zulu army in its former state of efficiency. Under his rule the Zulus continued to be the most powerful of the South African tribes, and their warlike disposition augured ill for a lasting peace.

In the meantime Cetewayo's neighbours, the Boers of the Orange Free State, had been living fairly quietly. For a time they allowed the remnants of the Bantu tribes who still remained in the country to live peace-

ably in their own fashion, and merely imposed a labour tax on each kraal. To this at first the natives in their joy at being relieved from the Matabele rule did not demur; but as their numbers increased, and the Boer yoke pressed more heavily on them, they became discontented, and raids were of frequent occurrence. Many cruel and barbarous acts were committed; unoffending and innocent persons were murdered and horribly mutilated; and the Boers, roused to fury, forgot all moderation, and in their turn committed many cruelties. The disturbances extended into Bechuanaland, where Dr. Livingstone was working as a missionary. He was greatly incensed at the severity of the measures adopted by the Boers; and with the view of opening up the country and inaugurating happier conditions for the natives, he undertook the journeys which resulted in the discovery of Lake Ngami and the Zambezi River, with its wonderful Victoria Falls.

The South African Republic gradually increased its territory, until by 1860 the outlying settlements of Zoutpansberg, Utrecht, and Lydenburg were all included in its dominions. But the country was not in a settled condition, and feeling ran so high that the contending parties in the state took up arms to settle difficulties. On the restoration of peace in 1864 Mr. Pretorius became president, and Mr. Paul Kruger, who as a boy had fought against Dingaan's forces, was appointed commandant-general.

Though the South African Republic increased its territories, the burghers made no advance in civilization, and still considered that their children were sufficiently educated when they were able to read the

Bible, which was still the one book ever studied by the average Boer. The people lived chiefly on isolated farms scattered broadcast over the high plateau known as the Hoogeveldt. Money was little used among them, for they seldom troubled about modern luxuries, and their farms supplied most of their simple wants. Owing to the lack of money in the country, the salaries of the president and the other officials were seldom paid at the proper time ; and the drifts or fords still remained the only means of crossing rivers, for it never occurred to any one to construct bridges.

Mr. Pretorius resigned office in 1871, and was succeeded by Mr. Burgers, who had formerly been a clergyman of the Dutch Church, but had adopted agnostic opinions. He was a clever man, and being much better educated than the majority of his countrymen, he desired to bring about a number of reforms. He could see no reason why the South African Republic should not fill an important position among the nations, and as a means to this end he desired to construct roads and bridges, railways and telegraphs. He was fully alive to the necessity of improving the education of the people, and he proposed, further, to build schools and colleges in which the rising generation might learn the arts and sciences taught in other lands.

When he had been two years in office he went to Europe to raise money with which to carry out his schemes. Ninety thousand pounds was soon subscribed, and with this sum Burgers obtained railway plant, which he shipped to Lorenzo Marques ; but the money was then exhausted, and the railway scheme failed ignominiously. The educational projects, however, looked more promising ; and when the president returned to

Pretoria he took with him a number of teachers to instruct the pupils in colleges which had yet to be built.

On reaching Pretoria, however, Burgers found it necessary to turn his attention to less peaceful matters, for Sekukuni, the chief of the Bapedi tribe, had incurred the displeasure of the republic, and it became necessary to call out a commando to chastise him. Mr. Burgers proposed to be his own general; but the Boers, whose religion was a strict form of Calvinism, were deeply offended by his agnostic views, and believing that no blessing could rest on his work, had little heart for the expedition. Many trekked beyond the boundary of the republic; but though others responded to the call, and actually captured one of the enemy's strongholds, they despaired of further success, and declined to stay in the field.

The affairs of the Boers were now in a most complicated state. They had already fallen out with their Zulu neighbours by reason of certain demands made by the republic, the principal of which was that the Zulus should respect a new boundary line which deprived them of a portion of their territory. All Zulus were driven off the disputed country, and the Boers refused to allow them to cultivate land which was by right their own. Cetewayo was not disposed to admit the right of the Boers either to alter the boundary or to interfere with his people, and he called out his impis, at the same time sending a messenger to Sir Henry Bulwer, the governor of Natal, to ask if the English expected him to allow himself "to be turned out of his own house."

Almost at the same time that Cetewayo's message arrived Sir Henry received a note from Mr. Burgers's

representative asking if there was any objection to the Boers taking up arms to enforce their views upon the king. The matter was communicated to the Imperial Government, and the Boers were officially informed that they could not be permitted to extend their territory at the expense of the Zulus.

For the time being the decision put a stop to any disturbance between the South African Republic and the Zulus. But the failure of the expedition against Sekukuni completely altered the face of affairs. The natives naturally supposed that at last the time had come when they might with reasonable hope of success attack the republic and eat up their ancient enemies. Cetewayo caught the infection, and there seemed to be every prospect that before many months had passed the Zulus and the other warlike tribes would rush over the frontier and spread death and destruction all over the land.

At this stage the British Government sent Sir Theophilus Shepstone to Pretoria as High Commissioner. As the best means of securing peace and promoting the well-being of all concerned, he was instructed to induce the Boers to relinquish their independence and accept British suzerainty, though at the same time he was accorded almost unlimited discretionary powers. The scheme was entirely acceptable to some of the English and German settlers; and the president himself, taking into consideration the condition of the republic at the time, was disposed to agree under protest to the plan propounded by Sir Theophilus. The bulk of the members of the Volksraad were vehemently opposed to British suzerainty; but no one could suggest any better means of restoring order, and on April 12,

1877, the High Commissioner declared the South African Republic annexed to the British Empire, and changed its name to the Transvaal.

A week later eight hundred British soldiers crossed the boundary from Natal. No attempt whatever was made to oppose them, and, indeed, at some places they were warmly welcomed, while one old woman declared that more than sixty years earlier she had prophesied that she should live to see British troops in the country. Others, however, were less pleased, and the burghers sent Messrs. Paul Kruger and Joubert with a numerously-signed document protesting against the annexation. But the government believed that British rule would be advantageous to the country, and was further under the impression that it was desired by a number of people. Consequently, the deputation was not successful, and the burghers were informed that the British flag would continue to float over the Transvaal.

CHAPTER XII.

ISANDHLWANA AND RORKE'S DRIFT.

THE British annexation of the Transvaal left the vexed question of the Zulu boundary still unsettled, and on leaving Pretoria Sir Theophilus Shepstone interviewed Cetewayo, who received his visitor in the most friendly fashion. He was puzzled by the annexation. "The Boers," he said, "are a nation of liars; what does the Queen want with such people?" He hinted that it would be a good thing to divide their territory between the British and the Zulus. When he found that this was not contemplated, he pressed for an immediate settlement of the boundary dispute, and asked privately for leave to make "one little raid" on the Swazi tribe, just to keep his young warriors in good humour. From his point of view, the request was a most reasonable one. He did not wish to offend the English by making war without their consent; but until his young men had, as they said, "washed their assegais," the young women would not consent to marry them.

Sir Theophilus did not see his way to permit the raid, but he promised that the boundary question should receive attention. The matter, however, was

not pressed forward. Month after month passed, and as still no settlement was made, the Zulus grew impatient, and sundry outrages were committed. Some of these were regarded by the authorities as insults to the British flag, and as Cetewayo refused to make any reparation, in December 1878, Sir Bartle Frere, who had become governor of Cape Colony in the previous year, issued an ultimatum to the Zulu king. The document imposed various terms, the chief of which were that in future none of Cetewayo's subjects should be put to death without trial; that the Zulu military system should be broken up; that a British Resident should be stationed in Zululand; and that sundry fines should be paid. Thirty days were allowed for compliance, and it was further declared that the Blood River was thenceforward to be the boundary between Zululand and the Transvaal.

The thirty days' grace came to an end on January 11, 1879, and on the following day Lord Chelmsford entered Zululand at the head of an army, which, in addition to the regular troops, included a contingent of blacks and colonial volunteers. The force advanced in three columns, one of which, commanded by Colonel C. K. Pearson, crossed the Tugela near its mouth, and after a sharp brush with the enemy, on the twenty-second of January encamped in a strong position at the deserted mission station of Etshowe. Another division, under Colonel (afterwards Sir Evelyn) Wood, started from Utrecht in the Transvaal, with the intention of eventually joining hands with Colonel Pearson; while Lord Chelmsford and Colonel Glynn, with the main body and the headquarters staff, crossed the Buffalo River at Rorke's Drift.

There the column divided, and a depot and hospital was established on the Natal side of the drift, while Lord Chelmsford with the rest of the column advanced across rugged, broken country to Isandhlwana, where they arrived on the twenty-first of January. The camp was pitched at the foot of a mound which bore a curious resemblance to a crouching lion, while in front a rolling plain covered with tall, rough grass stretched for miles to the south and east. Both ends of the mound were connected by *neks*, or ridges with lower heights, while the road to Natal ran over the westward nek. A deep ravine faced the camp on the north, and on the west it was shut in by the steep cliffs of Isandhlwana.

Contrary to the advice of the Boers, many of whom had joined the colonial contingent, no attempt was made to fortify the camp, and the tents were pitched without even the protection of a wagon laager. Early on the morning of the twenty-second of January, two parties, commanded respectively by Major Dartnell and Commandant Lonsdale, were sent out to reconnoitre. It was not thought that there were any Zulus in the neighbourhood, but when Dartnell had advanced a few miles he discovered an impi encamped at no great distance ahead. He sent a messenger to Isandhlwana for reinforcements, and a little later in the day Lord Chelmsford, with Colonel Glynn and a considerable force, went to his assistance. At the same time men were dispatched to Rorke's Drift to bring up Colonel Durnford, who, with a strong body of natives and Europeans, had recently arrived from the Tugela. Colonel Pulleine, who was left in command at the camp, was directed to draw in the outposts and make

preparations for defence, though even then it did not occur to the authorities to laager the camp.

In the meantime, a huge Zulu impi waited in the usual battle order—a monster crescent—a few miles from Isandhlwana. Assegai heads glittered in the sunshine, and men's eyes glowed with the light of battle, for they knew where the "red soldiers" were encamped, and already in anticipation they began to "see red." Not that they had originally intended or wished to fight that day, for, in Zulu phrase, the "moon was dead," and the omens were unpropitious; but the opportunity of "eating up" the British was too good to be neglected, and the horns of the crescent were moved forward swiftly and silently, so as to enclose the camp.

Before the manœuvre was fully carried into effect, a scouting party sent out by Colonel Durnford came in contact with one of the advancing horns, and immediately opened fire. Some of the Zulus were shot down, but as the others rushed madly forward the scouts were driven back on the camp. A body of cavalry on the left was also forced to retire, and when Colonel Durnford brought a rocket battery into action it was speedily silenced, though not before its terrible missiles had wrought deadly havoc in the advancing host. But men and horses, cut to pieces by the assegais of the Zulus, soon lay dead beside the guns, and the horns of the crescent continued to work their death-dealing way round the camp.

Then the centre advanced, and the fighting became general. All was confusion in the camp, for the maddened warriors dashed in among the tents, and no organized defence was possible. Every man fought

as best he could. The Zulus tell many tales of how the "red soldiers" stood at bay in squares or with their backs against stones and wagons, firing with such deadly aim that at last the enemy hesitated to attack them. But for every Zulu shot a dozen more rushed forward; and at last, when not a cartridge remained, and assegais and axes were matched only against bayonets and clubbed rifles, the force of numbers prevailed, and the Zulus slew until there was no one left to slay. They, too, had lost heavily, for over three thousand of their dead lay around the eight hundred or nine hundred British slain.

Some few contrived to cut their way through the enemy before the circle was quite closed. Among them was Lieutenant Melvill, who, almost at the last moment, was charged by Colonel Pulleine to take the Queen's colours of the 24th and try to save them. Accompanied by Lieutenant Coghill, Melvill reached the Buffalo; but the enemy was there before them, and as the brave fellows plunged into the flooded stream the Zulus opened fire upon them. Coghill, who some days earlier had severely injured his knee, reached the farther bank in safety. Then turning to look for his friend, he saw that Melvill had lost his horse and was struggling in the water. Without delay Coghill turned his horse and again dashed into the river, but before he could reach Melvill the horse was shot. Both officers had now to trust to their own exertions, and before they could struggle to the Natal bank the colours were swept from their grasp. But after a hard struggle they were seen to scramble ashore and climb the bank; then, worn out, they sat down to rest.

"It was not for some days after the twenty-second," says Colonel Glynn in his report, "that I could gather any information as to the probable fate of these officers. But immediately I discovered in what direction those who had escaped from Isandhlwana had crossed the Buffalo, I sent, under Major Black, 2nd Battalion 24th Regiment, a mounted party who volunteered for this service, to search for any trace that could be found of them. This search was successful, and both bodies were found where they were last seen. Several dead bodies of the enemy were found about them, so that they must have sold their lives dearly at the last."

Some of the fugitives were more fortunate, and about four o'clock in the afternoon two worn-out men rode into the camp at Rorke's Drift and told a terrible story. The Zulus, they said, were advancing, and already were at hand; there was no time to lose if the depot was to be saved and an invasion of Natal averted.

Two lieutenants named Chard and Bromhead were in charge, and they promptly set the men to cut loopholes in the walls of the hospital, build up earthworks of packing-cases, biscuit boxes, and mealie sacks, and lash together a few wagons to form a laager. Preparations were barely completed when the Zulus were seen approaching the camp, and the troops hurried to their stations.

On came the Zulus to eat up the "red soldiers" at Rorke's Drift, as they had eaten up their comrades at Isandhlwana. But at Rorke's Drift there had been time for preparation, and, defective as the fortifications were, they afforded a certain amount of cover. About 4.30 p.m. six hundred of the enemy charged the mealie-

bag wall, but as they approached a withering fire from the garrison poured into their ranks. Still, undeterred by their heavy losses, they pressed forward, until within fifty yards of the grinning line of muzzles another tornado of bullets crashed through them with such deadly effect that even Zulu courage was staggered. Out-buildings, walls, and trees, however, afforded plenty of cover; and the Zulus, having taken shelter at every convenient point, in their turn opened a brisk fire.

The hospital now came in for a full share of attention, and when they failed to force an entrance, some of them set the roof on fire. But the building was defended by brave men, four of whom, Privates John Williams, Henry Hook, Robert Jones, and William Jones, earned the honourable distinction of the Victoria Cross for their exceeding valour. While the Zulus were raging round the blazing hospital, Williams broke holes in the clay partitions, through which, with some assistance from Hook, he contrived to drag the sick, and thus twenty out of twenty-three patients in the hospital were rescued. The others, unfortunately, could not be saved.

Meanwhile, the two Joneses guarded the doors against the surging crowd, "and," says Robert Jones, "as fast as they came up to the doorway we bayoneted them, until the doorway was nearly filled with dead and wounded Zulus."

Hook, who in addition to his other labours also defended a door, accounted in like manner for several assailants; and so the struggle continued, until the flames did what the Zulus could not accomplish, and forced the gallant defenders to retire from the building. As they did so the roof fell in with a crash.

Outside, in the lurid light from the blazing hospital, the fight still raged. Again and again the Zulus tried to rush the feeble defences, but each time a storm of lead drove them back ; and though after midnight their courage began to cool, it was not until 4 a.m. on the twenty-third that firing entirely ceased.

The two lieutenants, whose pluck and ready resource had inspired the defence which saved the camp from destruction and Natal from invasion, did not go unrewarded. Honours and thanks were showered upon them. They were promoted to the rank of major, and to them, as well as to the four privates who defended the hospital, the Victoria Cross was given. Nor were these six all who earned the prize "For Valour" at Rorke's Drift, for the cross was also conferred on Assistant-Commissary Dalton, Surgeon-Major Reynolds, Corporals Allen and Schiess, and Private Hitch, all of whom had abundantly proved their right to be classed among the bravest of the brave.

Before the fight began at Isandhlwana, Lord Chelmsford and his party had joined Major Dartnell and put the enemy to flight. Shortly afterwards, a note from Colonel Pulleine informed the general that firing was going on in the neighbourhood of Isandhlwana. An inspection of the country from a neighbouring hill did not reveal anything unusual ; Lord Chelmsford saw no reason for haste, and before returning he selected a site for the next camp. While he was so employed, Commandant Lonsdale galloped up with the news that the camp had been totally destroyed, and that he himself had narrowly escaped death. Then at last the men were collected, and, marching cautiously, they proceeded to Isandhlwana. But neither on the way nor

at the camp were any Zulus seen, except for the mangled dead who strewed the ground in all directions. The place was totally deserted. Worn out as they were, the men lay down to sleep for a few hours among the scattered corpses, with whom, as they knew, they might soon be numbered; for, as the camp had been looted, ammunition and provisions were alike scarce, and it would be impossible to hold out if the enemy returned. But happily the Zulus were engaged elsewhere, and in the gray dawn of the morning the soldiers set out for Rorke's Drift, where they arrived shortly after the enemy had been driven off.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE END OF THE WAR.

FOR some time after the disaster at Isandhlwana very little was done. The colonists in Natal expected an immediate invasion, and many of the frontier farms were deserted. But the Zulus kept quiet, and their whereabouts and exact occupation remained shrouded in mystery. Lord Chelmsford was not idle, and troops were sent up from Cape Town, volunteers were called out in Natal, and in the course of a few days the frontier was put in a state of defence.

Colonel Pearson, meanwhile, was closely invested in his fortified camp at Etshowe; but Colonel Wood and his men made an incursion into the enemy's country to bring out the wives and children of Cetewayo's brother Oham, who had made friends with the British. Shortly afterwards a hundred men belonging to the 80th Regiment, who were waiting near the Itombe River to escort a convoy, were attacked by the Abaqulusi, whose chief, Umbeline, was one of Cetewayo's most valiant indunas. The escort was encamped on both sides of the river, and early on the morning of the thirteenth of March four thousand Zulus, under cover of long grass and heavy fog, crept up and fell upon the

sleeping soldiers in one of the camps. Out of sixty men only fifteen escaped with their lives, and these crossed the river and sought safety with their comrades on the farther bank.

The troops at Etshowe had only sufficient provisions to last until the end of March. It was necessary that they should be relieved; and Lord Chelmsford, with a force of six thousand men, two-thirds of whom were British, advanced upon the fort. The country was patrolled by the cavalry and by native scouts supplied by John Dunn, an Englishman who had acquired so much power in Zululand that he had risen to the position of a chief; while, to guard against night surprises, a fortified camp was formed at every halting-place. No lights were allowed at night, noise of all kinds was strictly forbidden, and every precaution was taken.

But the Zulus were equally on the alert, and at the first streak of dawn on the second of April they swooped down on the camp at Gingihlovo. Colonel Pearson, however, had seen them on the move, and as he signalled the news to the camp the troops were prepared. As the Zulus advanced in the usual crescent formation they were greeted by a withering fire from the rifles and Gatling guns, while the rocket batteries cut long lanes through their ranks. More than once they fell back "shattered and sundered," but again and again they formed up and rushed furiously towards the trenches, which they never succeeded in reaching. At last, when they had lost hundreds of men, they gave up the attempt to rush the camp, and fled in confusion, while the cavalry followed and cut them down as they ran. The way to Etshowe was now

open, and a few hours later a relief party escorted the garrison to the camp.

Colonel Wood was still busy with the Abaqulusi, and on the twenty-eighth of March his cavalry attacked Umbeline's stronghold on the Hlobane Mountain. The mountain was all but impregnable, and was bravely defended; but at last the cavalry struggled up to the top and halted to rest, supposing that the position was in their hands. The Zulus, however, were merely in hiding, and it was not long before hundreds of warriors crept out from the rocks and charged the troops, at the same time working round so as to cut off the British from the only point where it seemed possible to descend.

The fight recommenced more furiously than before, and at that moment the soldiers saw a huge Zulu impi rapidly crossing the plain towards the mountain. The case was desperate, and desperate men found an outlet which in cooler moments they would probably have deemed utterly impracticable. But there was no choice now, and they urged their horses—slipping, sliding, and scrambling—down the rocks and over the steep grassy slope towards the plain. At every step the Zulus crowded round them, and many brave fellows were cut down or shot, but at last some of the fugitives reached the plain. Among those who fell was Commandant Peter Uys. He was last seen with his dead horse lying at his feet and his back against a rock, fighting as his father had fought forty-one years before in the war with Moselekatse. He had been struck by at least two assegais, but as he stood at bay with his empty revolver in his hand no less than six Zulus lay dead at his feet.

The camp at Kambula was several miles distant, but those who gained the plain were comparatively safe, for they had the advantage of being on horseback, and were able to outstrip their pursuers. On the following day, however, an impi twenty thousand strong attacked the camp on all sides at once. It was fortunate that it was well entrenched, for, heedless of the fire which mowed them down by hundreds, the Zulus more than once contrived to make their way inside the defences. But those who entered were shot or cut down, until at last so many had fallen that the enemy was obliged to retreat.

Reinforcements were on the way from England, and with them came the ex-Prince Imperial of France. He started merely as a spectator, but not long after his arrival he was attached to Lord Chelmsford's staff, and took his share in whatever work might be on hand. The general himself was busy planning the contemplated invasion of Zululand. There were many difficulties to be faced, for there was not a road in the country. At that season grass was scarce. In many places wood was not easily obtainable, and all supplies had to be carried in ox wagons with the troops. All these obstacles had to be met, and anxiety preyed so heavily on Lord Chelmsford that he wrote to England that he was worn out by the long-continued strain. It was understood that he wished to be relieved, and Sir Garnet (afterwards Lord) Wolseley, was ordered to proceed to Zululand to take up the command and act as High Commissioner in Natal, Zululand, and the Transvaal.

But in the meantime Lord Chelmsford was in command, and on the first of June the advance into Zulu-

land began. The next day a reconnoitring party was sent out under the command of the Prince Imperial to examine the ground ahead and select a camping-place. Lieutenant Carey of the 98th also accompanied the party, which was smaller than had been intended, as some of the men did not arrive at the appointed time, and the prince refused to wait for them. Not a Zulu was visible, and having finished their task, officers and men halted at midday to rest. A Kafir who accompanied them mentioned that he had seen a solitary Zulu in the distance; but no alarm was excited, and it was some time before the prince gave the order to mount. At that moment a body of warriors appeared. The attack was so sudden that a panic seems to have seized the soldiers, and every one scrambled as best he could on to his horse, and rode off without attempting to make any resistance, or even stopping to see what befell the rest of the party.

One man was shot while he was trying to mount, another fell a few seconds later, and when the prince was last seen alive he was running beside his horse preparatory to leaping into the saddle. It was supposed that he had succeeded in doing so, but a minute or two later a man looked round and saw him on the ground surrounded by furious Zulus. It seemed impossible that he could be living, and Carey considered that, under the circumstances, to attempt a rescue would not only be useless, but a mere reckless waste of life, and the men returned to camp without going back to look for their fallen companions. The next day the prince's body was found covered with wounds. It appeared that his horse must have broken loose, and that then he had stood at bay until he was surrounded and cut down.

A storm of indignation arose against Lieutenant Carey, and he was sent under arrest to England; but military authorities decided in his favour, and he was released immediately after he landed.

Two days later the force joined hands with Colonel Wood, and Colonel Buller defeated a Zulu impi in the neighbourhood of the camp, which was situated on the spot selected by the Prince Imperial. It now appeared that Cetewayo was tired of the war, for before the march was continued messengers came in to ask for peace. Negotiations went on for some days, and on the thirtieth of June Lord Chelmsford sent a definite answer to the Zulu king. The troops, he said, must proceed to the other side of the Umvolosi River, a distance of about ten miles, but that no further advance should be made if within four days Cetewayo surrendered some guns and other spoil looted from Isandhlwana, and also sent in one of his regiments to lay down its arms. Cetewayo, however, did not comply with the terms, though it is said that he would have done so if he had been permitted by his army. But the fact remained that no compliance was made, and on the third of July a reconnoitring party commanded by Colonel Buller had a sharp skirmish with the enemy. It was clear that the war must be fought out, and the next day the troops advanced on the royal kraal at Ulundi.

Zulus were seen in all directions, but apparently they hesitated to attack, and contented themselves with hovering round the column until it reached a strong position, where the general formed his men in a hollow square. Up to this time the cavalry had been patrolling on all sides with the view of keeping the

enemy at a distance, but as the Zulus were seen preparing to attack, the cavalry were recalled and stationed inside the square. This time there were no entrenchments, but "the white soldiers," said a Zulu, "made a wall of their bodies." The warriors attempted to dash in, but such a blaze of fire burst from that living wall that not a man could come to close quarters, and at the first sign of wavering the cavalry dashed out and charged. For a few moments a wild struggle continued, and then the Zulus took flight, and the battle of Ulundi was won. The victorious troops then destroyed the kraal, and returned quietly to camp in the evening.

By this time Sir Garnet Wolseley was in Natal, and shortly after the battle Lord Chelmsford resigned the command and returned to England. All was now quiet in Zululand, for Cetewayo had fled, and the impis were disheartened. It was rumoured, however, that peace would only be of short duration; and with the view of finally breaking the Zulu power, Sir Garnet advanced with a considerable force to Ulundi. Messengers were sent to Cetewayo calling upon him to surrender unconditionally; and then, as he declined to do so, various attempts were made to capture him. But his people were faithful, and for a long time neither threats nor persuasions could induce any one to disclose his whereabouts. At last a man less faithful than the rest consented to betray his hiding-place, and on the twenty-eighth of August Major Marter, with a party of dragoons, surrounded the kraal where Cetewayo was concealed, and succeeded in capturing him. He was taken back to Ulundi, and on the first of September was sent down as a prisoner to Cape Town.

After remaining for a short time in captivity, he was allowed to live with his wives on a farm in the colony, and was also permitted to visit England, where he was treated as an honoured guest.

Zululand was thus left without a king, and Sir Garnet divided it into thirteen districts, each of which was to be governed by Zulu laws, administered by an independent chief, subject to the supreme authority of a British Resident. The plan was not found to answer in the long run, and in 1883 Cetewayo returned to his kingdom. For a year he ruled well, but civil war broke out, and after his death in 1884 affairs fell into such a state of confusion that in 1887 the country was taken definitely under British rule.

CHAPTER XIV.

INDEPENDENCE OF THE TRANSVAAL.

WHEN Sir Garnet Wolseley had placed the affairs of Zululand on what he hoped would be a satisfactory basis, he proceeded to the Transvaal, which was at that time in a very unsettled state. The British annexation of the country was extremely distasteful to the Boers. They continued to protest vigorously against the measure; and when assured that the Imperial Government had no intention of restoring their independence at that or any other time, many of them flatly refused to pay taxes. The unconciliatory policy of Sir Owen Lanyon, who had succeeded Sir Theophilus Shepstone, tended to aggravate the growing dissatisfaction. Discontent became daily more marked. Meetings were held, and the Boers, both men and women, declared that they would fight for their independence if they could not regain it by peaceable means.

Matters had reached this stage when, towards the end of 1879, Sekukuni again became aggressive. Sir Garnet found it necessary to take action against him, and with a strong force composed of British troops and Swazis invaded his country. It was a wild, rugged region, and the troops had considerable difficulty in advancing, but after five days of hard work they reached

the mountain fortress of the Bapedi. The kraal stood near the foot of a rocky hill or kopje, which was not only so steep as to be in places almost unclimbable, but was honeycombed with caves and underground passages, so that it formed a practically impregnable stronghold. Favoured by the darkness of a wet, stormy night the troops closed in unseen on the kraal, and early on the morning of the twenty-eighth of November the attack began.

The Bapedi defended themselves bravely. They rushed down upon the troops through a storm of bullets, and a furious hand-to-hand fight began, in which hundreds of Bapedi were killed. Furiously as the defenders fought, they were at last obliged to give way; and the victorious British, having set fire to the kraal, moved on to attack the kopje where the Bapedi now held out. This was the stronghold which the Boers, led by Mr. Burgers, had failed to capture, and it was now shelled for four hours without result. Artillery was evidently useless, and Sir Garnet ordered the British troops to charge the rocky heights and carry the place by assault. As they sprang forward with a cheer, he rode up to the Swazis, shouting, "Come on, you fellows, come on!" They did not understand his words, but his meaning was plain to them, and rushing forward, they raced neck and neck with the white men to the top of the kopje.

It was difficult to say who first reached the summit, where the Bapedi fought until, seeing that their stronghold was scaled, they retired into the caves. They could not be ousted by force, so Sir Garnet decided to starve them into surrender, and a cordon was formed round the hill. They held out for some time, but lack

of food and water compelled them to give in on the first of December, and three days later Sir Garnet Wolseley returned to Pretoria, taking with him the captive chief.

Not long after his return news reached the Transvaal that the Conservative Government under Lord Beaconsfield had gone out of office, and that Mr. Gladstone, who at the time of the annexation had expressed sympathy with the Boers, had become prime minister. The news raised the hopes of the independence party, for they naturally thought that Mr. Gladstone would now see his way to give a practical form to his sympathy; and they were proportionately disappointed when it was again announced that the British Government could not withdraw the annexation. Matters then rapidly reached a crisis; and on December 8, 1880, a conference assembled at Paarde Kraal, the site of the present Krugersdorp. The deliberations continued for some days. On the thirteenth of December it was finally decided to restore the republic, and the government was placed in the hands of Messrs. Paul Kruger, Pieter Joubert, and M. W. Pretorius. Three days later—on the sixteenth of December, “Dingaan’s Day,”—the flag of the South African Republic was raised at Heidelberg, which was to be regarded as the capital until such time as Pretoria could be regained.

Earlier in the year Sir Garnet Wolseley had been relieved by Sir George Pomeroy Colley, and at the same time some of the British troops were withdrawn from the Transvaal. Garrisons still remained at Lydenburg, Pretoria, and other places; and Colonel Anstruther, with about 260 men, was sent from Lydenburg to reinforce the troops at Pretoria. He had been warned to

proceed carefully; but as he appears to have considered that the Boers were not likely to prove very formidable enemies, he failed to keep a good lookout, and, on the twentieth of December, suddenly encountered a Boer force near Bronkhorst Spruit. One of the Boers came up with a flag of truce and a note for the colonel, which announced that "the republic having been proclaimed at Heidelberg, and the Dutch people being determined to retain it, any movements of English troops were prejudicial to their interests, and if the colonel advanced beyond the spruit they should consider it a declaration of war." Colonel Anstruther read the note and remarked, "I have got my orders for Pretoria, and to Pretoria I'll go." The Boer then rode back to his companions, and as soon as he reached them firing began.

In less than ten minutes all the British officers were killed or wounded, and at least a hundred of the men had fallen. The deadly fire of the Boers was mowing down the troops like grass, and Colonel Anstruther, who himself was mortally wounded, told the men to surrender. They were instantly made prisoners and marched off to Heidelberg, while an escort of Boers took the ammunition wagons off the field. At Colonel Anstruther's request, Commandant Joubert then allowed two men to go to Pretoria to fetch assistance for the wounded, and one of them managed to save the colours of the 94th by wrapping them round his body under his coat.

The first action of the war had thus ended in a decided victory for the burghers, and proved that they were by no means the despicable enemy which some people were inclined to think them; but it also put an

end to all hope of a peaceful solution of the difficulty, and Sir George Colley began to prepare to advance into the Transvaal, though his whole force was only about 1,500 strong. His immediate object was the dispersion of the Boers already in the field, and the relief of the British garrisons at Standerton, Pretoria, and Potchefstroom.

The Boers expected an attack on the west frontier, and a number of burghers were stationed near Fourteen Streams to watch the border of Griqualand West. Colley had, however, no intention of making an inroad on that side of the country, and he assembled his troops near the Natal frontier. On January 24, 1881, they left Newcastle, and two days later had established themselves in a fortified camp at Mount Prospect, between three and four miles from Laing's Nek.

The next day the weather was so bad that the men remained quietly in camp, but on the twenty-eighth of January Sir George gave orders for an advance on Laing's Nek, where a considerable force of Boers held the road leading to the Transvaal. The path over the nek lay through very rough, hilly ground, and above it on the west towered a square-topped mountain called Amajuba, whose precipitous sides sloped away to the rugged gorge of the Buffalo River. A table-shaped hill, which rose steeply above the road on the east, formed the key to the whole position, and Sir George directed his attack against its eastern end.

At 9.30 the artillery opened proceedings by shelling different parts of the hill, while the 58th Foot led the assault, supported by a squadron of mounted infantry, who were directed to attack another hill on the left of the enemy's position. Though the steep, rocky ground

was not well suited for cavalry work, the men quickly made their way to the top of the hill. There they were greeted by a shower of bullets, and as they dashed forward on the enemy's line so many fell that the troop was obliged to withdraw. Forming up, the gallant fellows charged again; but though the Boers had no artillery, their rifle fire was deadly; and as, moreover, they were all in cover, the charge was ineffectual. Men and horses were alike weary; the leading troop had lost so heavily that it was unable to push on alone; and owing to the steepness of the hill and the galling fire of the Boers, the supports failed to arrive. With a few more men the position might have been carried, but no more were available, and the survivors of the two charges gave way and slowly retired down the slope.

The 58th in the meanwhile had been climbing steadily, and at first had met with little resistance from the Boers, who had been wholly occupied in repulsing the cavalry. But they were now at liberty to turn their attention to the 58th; and as the men, panting and breathless, scrambled up the last portion of the slope, the Boers on the summit shot them down almost as fast as they appeared. Colonel Deane, who led the assault, tried to carry the position with a rush; but his men were too much blown to charge, and as the colonel sprang forward he was struck by a bullet, and fell dead ten yards in advance of the foremost man. Most of the other officers were also shot, and though the men made a stubborn attempt to hold their ground, they were at last beaten back and forced to retire, protected by several companies which were pushed forward to cover their retreat. But though the 58th was driven back it was not routed, and at the foot of the hill the

regiment leisurely formed up, and, as Sir George Colley said in his official dispatch, "marched back into position in as good order, and with as erect and soldierly a bearing, as when it marched out."

The repulse had, however, been a decided one; and as reinforcements were on their way to the front, Sir George revised his plans, and determined not to renew the attack until the troops came up. For some days the Boers remained fairly quiet, occupied, apparently, in strengthening their defences and bringing more men to the front. But on the seventh of February they changed their tactics, and that afternoon a telegram received at Maritzburg stated: "Post bags, under small escort mounted infantry, left column to-day for Newcastle. After proceeding as far as Ingogo, were fired on by force of Boers, and compelled to retire back on camp with mail. No casualties, but one man missing; supposed he has got through to Newcastle. Attack on camp not expected. Wire may be cut any moment. All communication stopped."

An hour or two later it was announced that the Boers were assembled in force within ten miles of Newcastle, and Sir George found it necessary to advance the next day with the view of clearing the road and restoring communication. On the morning of the eighth he moved out of camp with two field and two mountain guns, five companies of the 60th Rifles, and thirty-eight mounted men. With this force he crossed the Ingogo River at a ford called the Double Drift, because the crossing-place lay just above the junction of two branches of the stream, both of which were rocky and dangerous, and subject to sudden floods. Beyond the river the road wound down a long, stony

hill, and then rose up by a gentle ascent to a level plateau covered with scattered boulders.

The two mountain guns and one company of the Rifles were told off to hold the road, and the rest of the troops crossed the Double Drift and advanced cautiously, keeping a sharp lookout. At first no Boers were seen, but near the ridge scouts came in and reported that the enemy was in strong force ahead. Shortly afterwards skirmishing began. Sir George Colley's vedettes were driven in, and hoping to gain the plateau before the Boers took possession of it, the troops pushed forward with all speed. On the way large numbers of the enemy were seen, and before the desired position was reached, the Boers had posted themselves in several valleys along the route and behind conveniently-placed boulders, from which they poured in a galling fire.

Fighting soon became general; and while the British occupied a small triangular plateau, the Boers, who found cover in several parts of the rocky slopes, continued to pour in volley after volley. There was little shelter on the plateau itself, and the artillery lost so heavily that it soon became necessary to withdraw the guns. With a larger cavalry force the slopes might easily have been cleared, but many of the thirty-eight men who had come out were already dismounted, and so few horses were unwounded that anything like a cavalry charge was out of the question, while the position held by the Boers made the British rifle fire almost ineffective.

Messengers were sent back to the camp for reinforcements, who were directed to hold the road on both sides of the river. For three hours a heavy fire was kept up by the Boers; but though the British suffered severely,

they doggedly held out. Still, the burghers' aim was terribly good, and no one could show himself on the plateau without running the risk of being almost immediately shot; while on the other hand, though the troops fired steadily, their bullets did comparatively little harm to the well-sheltered enemy.

In the course of the afternoon the Boers were more than once reinforced by the arrival of fresh parties of burghers, and about four o'clock the fight was renewed with great vigour. The British, however, still continued to hold the position; and as all the efforts of the Boers failed to dislodge them, shortly after sunset the enemy retired. As there was every probability that the attack would be renewed, the troops, who had no supplies for a night out, were ordered to withdraw under cover of the darkness. But to give the order was one thing, and to carry it out was another, for so many horses had been killed that those remaining were barely sufficient to move the guns. It was found impossible to bring either the ammunition wagons or the wounded off the field; and the latter, having been made as comfortable as possible with blankets, greatcoats, and waterproof sheets, were left in charge of Surgeon McGann and Mr. Ritchie, the chaplain, until ambulances could be sent to fetch them.

Rain was falling heavily, and when the retiring troops reached the drift the first men who attempted to cross were swept off their feet and carried downstream until a conveniently projecting sandbank enabled them to scramble ashore. The rest took warning by the mishap, and grasping one another's hands, managed to cross without special difficulty. Later in the evening, however, Lieutenant Wilkinson, the

adjutant of the 60th Rifles, who had been sent to carry help to the wounded, was drowned with six men as he attempted to recross the stream, which by that time had become a raging torrent.

In the meantime President Brand of the Orange Free State had been exerting himself in the interests of peace; and on the ninth of February, the day following the Ingogo fight, Sir George Colley received an official telegram requesting him to inform Mr. Brand that if the Boers ceased from armed opposition the British Government hoped to be able to form a scheme which would lead to a "permanent friendly settlement of difficulties." But the Boers were not yet disposed for peace, and apparently had determined to free themselves effectually from British interference. No immediate results followed the receipt of the telegram, and though the main body of the Boers remained in camp at Laing's Nek, they frequently received reinforcements, and whenever occasion offered, their patrols swooped down on convoys, or made a raid on some neighbouring farm.

On the other hand, reinforcements were also on the way to the British camp; and on the seventeenth of February Sir Evelyn Wood reached Newcastle with the 92nd Highlanders, a battalion of the 60th Rifles, and two squadrons of the 3rd Hussars. Sir George Colley came down to meet him and confer with him on the plan of campaign; and after a day or two spent in making arrangements and reconnoitring the neighbourhood, Sir George returned to Mount Prospect, while Sir Evelyn went to Maritzburg to send up the remainder of the troops. Sir George now felt himself strong enough to undertake further operations; and on Saturday, the

twenty-sixth of February, he decided to occupy the Amajuba Hill, which commanded the Boer camp, and was, therefore, a most important position. As a surprise was intended, he remained in camp until after nightfall, and then set out quietly with about six hundred men, detailed from the 58th and 92nd Regiments and the Rifle Brigade, two guns, and a detachment of the Hussars. The ascent soon became so steep that it was impossible to take the guns farther; they were therefore sent back to camp, and the Hussars and Rifles were told off to guard the spare ammunition, which was left in a fairly strong position at the foot of the hill.

Sir George and the rest of the party then scrambled up the slope, which in some places was so rocky and precipitous that they had to go on all fours, while elsewhere the way was barred by precipitous ravines or huge boulders. Altogether, Amajuba proved to be only just short of unclimbable, and day was breaking before the plateau was reached. There was then little time for rest; and while some of the men prepared breakfast, others began to dig for water.

In the Boer camp equal activity and more excitement prevailed. The burghers had already caught sight of the British, and their first care was to move a wagon laager, which, had Sir George been provided with artillery, would have been in a very unsafe position at the foot of the hill. They then began to prepare for an assault, and a long line of men moved out of the camp and divided into three sections, so as to attack the hill at several points at once. Other Boers took up a position from which they could fire on to the hill, and thus cover the movements of their comrades.

The British on the summit were thus kept busy. Apparently no one had any idea that under cover of the fire three storming parties were climbing the slopes, for Sir George Colley signalled from time to time to the camp that all was going well. About one o'clock, however, a murderous fire suddenly opened on the left of the position, and every available man was called up to meet it and drive back the enemy, who was now approaching the crest. The advantage was entirely with the Boers, for they were still more or less in cover, and as the top of the hill was unprotected, every man who showed himself above the crest was shot down. So many fell that in less than a quarter of an hour the troops began to waver. But the officers rallied them; and, fixing their bayonets, they returned volley for volley. Other ten minutes passed, and then the supply of cartridges failed, for all the reserve ammunition was still far off at the bottom of the hill. Some of the men attempted to charge, and they dashed forward through such a deadly hail of bullets that few, if any, reached the enemy's line. It was clear that the fight was lost, and Sir George Colley was just giving the order to cease firing when he was shot through the head. Then the men broke and fled, scrambling helter-skelter down the rocks, where many were shot as they ran.

The firing attracted the attention of the ammunition guard at the foot of the hill; but as the men received no orders to advance, they maintained their position until the headlong flight began, when the Hussars went out to try to help the wounded. They soon brought in news of the disaster, and it became clear to Captain Robertson, the officer in charge, that he

and his men were in a very serious position. It was scarcely possible for them to retire to camp without assistance, and he prepared as well as he could to defend the post.

Fresh ammunition boxes were opened, and sentries were posted with orders to hold the enemy in check if possible, and when they could do so no longer, to fall back upon the laager. Captain Robertson's main object was to secure the safety of the spare ammunition, and having packed it securely on the backs of the baggage mules, he sent the animals quietly, one at a time, down a wooded ravine, by which they could make their way without much danger to the camp. The plan succeeded admirably, for not a single cartridge was captured by the enemy.

By the time the arrangements were completed the Boers were rapidly advancing on the camp, keeping up, as usual, a deadly fire. It seemed useless, under the circumstances, to continue to hold the position, and Captain Robertson signalled to the camp for orders. The reply was that if he had no orders from Amajuba he had better retire; and accordingly the men were directed to move off, one company at a time, so as to act alternately as covering and advancing parties. No sooner was the laager vacated than the Boers took possession of it, and sent deadly showers of bullets among the retiring companies. Among those who fell was Surgeon-Major Cornish, who was engaged at the time in helping to carry a wounded man.

At last the men reached the bottom of the slope, where they expected to find a supporting company of the Rifles. But there was no one to be seen; and breaking their ranks, the poor fellows rushed headlong

towards the camp, protected in some degree by the artillery, which opened fire on the Boers and checked their advance.

Sir Evelyn Wood, on whom the chief command and High Commissionership now devolved, was at Maritzburg when the news of the defeat reached him. He immediately started for the front; and as by that time reinforcements were pouring into the country, he soon found himself in a position to deal with any force that the Boers were likely to put into the field. But at that moment telegraphic instructions from the Home Government desired him not to advance; and on the sixth of March he had a conference with General Joubert, which resulted in the conclusion of an eight days' armistice.

Peace negotiations were still in progress, and the real object of the armistice was to allow President Kruger to reply to a communication which had been sent to him by Sir George Colley. A few days later the truce was renewed, and on the twenty-first of March Sir Evelyn Wood and several other British officers held an important conference with the Boer leaders—President Kruger, and Messrs. P. Joubert, Pretorius, Jorissen, Dirk Uys, Mare, and C. Joubert. President Brand was also present. Terms of peace were discussed, and finally both parties agreed to a compromise, which guaranteed the recognition by Great Britain of the partial independence of the Transvaal. Though on one hand the right of self-government in internal affairs was secured to the republic, the Boers on the other hand accepted the suzerainty of the reigning sovereign of Great Britain, and agreed to acknowledge a British Resident at their capital.

CHAPTER XV.

THE RISE OF RHODESIA.

AFTER the defeat of Moselekatse by the Boers in 1837 the Matabele deserted the country immediately to the northward of the Vaal, and pursued their destructive way northward to the districts beyond the Limpopo, which, as yet, were free from the inroads of the white man. There for some years they carried on their former practices, destroying the Mashona tribes just as they had formerly destroyed the Bechuana. Military kraals were constructed after the Zulu pattern, and a new Matabeleland, very similar to that from which the tribe had been dislodged by the Boers, grew up on the land which belonged by right to the Mashona. But it was not long before the advancing whites crossed the Limpopo, and hunters and traders made their way into the heart of the Matabele territory, which swarmed with big game of every description. Elephants, rhinoceroses, buffaloes, zebras, and antelopes of many varieties ranged over the plains, hippopotami abounded in the streams, and lions and leopards roamed over the land in search of prey. It was by no means unusual for a hungry lion to prowl all night round a hunting camp, though a wholesome dread of fire generally forced him to keep a respectful distance.

Ivory was for some years the most important production, though it was known that gold existed in the country. One of the first discoveries was made in 1867 by a hunter named Hartley. He had shot an elephant, and when he proceeded to remove the ivory he found that in falling the huge animal had dug one of his tusks into the ground. The soil thus broken up disclosed some glittering quartz, and as the hunter looked more closely he saw that a gold mine lay before him. In the course of a few years gold was found in various places, and at Zimbabwe some very ancient workings were discovered by a German explorer named Mauch. Near them were a ruined temple and fort, also of great antiquity; and investigation showed that Mashonaland is in all probability the country called in the Bible the land of Ophir, from which King Solomon obtained his supply of gold.

The discovery of gold attracted numerous prospectors to Mashonaland, and towards the end of 1888 three Englishmen—Messrs. Rudd, Thomson, and Macguire—induced Lobengula, the son of Moselekatse, to put his mark to a document giving them the right to dig for metals in his country. This was the first of a series of similar concessions obtained from the Matabele king by other prospectors; and in the course of 1889, Mr. Cecil John Rhodes, having gathered up the concessions, formed the British South Africa Company, which was incorporated under a royal charter on the twenty-ninth of October 1889.

Lobengula's original concessions had been intended merely as permits to a few small parties of prospectors to search for metal for which the Matabele had no particular use. At the same time the king fully intended

that the country should remain under his rule, and he had no idea whatever of handing it over to the British Government, or to any company, chartered or otherwise. Mr. Rhodes and the Imperial Government, however, took an entirely different view of the matter. It was considered desirable that the country should be brought under a more orderly and beneficent rule than that exercised by the Matabele, who had no respect for the lives or property of the Mashonas, and raided their kraals, put the people to death, and drove off the cattle whenever the whim seized them. The terms of the charter, therefore, conferred very extensive powers upon the British South Africa Company, and it forthwith assumed the government of all the country lying between British Bechuanaland, the Transvaal, and Portuguese East Africa.

In order to carry out the objects of the company, it was decided that a strong armed force should march into Mashonaland and take possession; but before any move was made, Dr. Jameson was sent to Lobengula's royal kraal at Buluwayo to arrange preliminaries with the king. Lobengula consented to allow the pioneer force to march into the country, but he advised Dr. Jameson to avoid Buluwayo and other military kraals which lay on the direct route, and warned him not to come into collision with the warriors. A roundabout route through Bechuanaland was consequently chosen, and in March 1890 a force of about two hundred Europeans and a hundred and fifty natives set out from Cape Colony under the command of Major Frank Johnson and Mr. F. C. Selous, one of the hunters who originally explored the country.

The pioneers were escorted by five hundred mounted

police, with mountain guns; and as it was intended that a series of forts should be built, they also carried an electric searchlight, a good store of provisions, and a variety of other supplies. The stores were conveyed in seventy wagons, and as most of the country traversed had never before been crossed by a wheeled vehicle, it was often necessary to cut roads through the pathless bush for miles at a stretch.

But the route, though long and toilsome, had the advantage of keeping clear of the military kraals; and on the twelfth of September, when the expedition reached Mount Hampden, the lofty hill which Mr. Selous had selected as headquarters, not a single life had been lost. Two or three forts had already been built and garrisoned along the line of march, and another post, Fort Salisbury, was established on a healthy plateau close to Mount Hampden.

The pioneers had now fulfilled their engagement, and many of them dispersed to prospect for gold. Some of them began work in low-lying, unhealthy valleys, and when the rainy season came on fever broke out. Unfortunately, the rains that year were unusually heavy and prolonged, and as there had been as yet no time to grow a supply of corn, provisions began to run short. There was no possibility of obtaining further supplies until stores came from the Cape, and Mr. Selous set out to try to hurry up a wagon train which should by rights have arrived before the wet season set in. It had been delayed by floods, but was not far distant, and soon after the rains ceased a plentiful supply of provisions reached Fort Salisbury. With the arrival of the wagons difficulties ended, and in the following year the British

officer reported such an improvement that, as he said, "the Mashonaland of 1892 was not recognizable as the Mashonaland of 1891."

So far all had gone well, but Lobengula now awoke to the fact that the white men had taken advantage of his concessions to an extent which he had never for a moment contemplated. But as in return they paid him a hundred sovereigns a month, and had placed an armed steamboat on the Zambezi, and supplied him with a thousand Martini-Henry rifles and a good stock of ammunition, he did not wish to quarrel with them. He desired to keep them in check without cutting off his own source of supplies, and in the hope of accomplishing his object he granted a counter concession to an independent Englishman, whom he empowered to sell land to private individuals within the territory already occupied by the Company. This ingenious plan, however, failed to accomplish its purpose, for the owner of the new concession sold his right to the Chartered Company, which thus acquired an accession of power, and extended its boundaries from the Portuguese territory to the Umnyati, a tributary of the Zambezi. Westward of that stream the land still remained in the hands of Lobengula, and white men had no rights whatever.

For several months matters went on quietly. A town began to grow up round Fort Salisbury, to which place the telegraph was extended; the prospectors continued their search for gold, and farms were taken up in various parts of the country. It is true that the Matabele were anything but pleased with the new arrangement; but though they continued to oppress and maltreat the Mashonas, they kept the peace so

far as the white men were concerned. Everything was so quiet that, though the forts were still maintained, the Company considered that its police force was unnecessarily strong, and a number of men were discharged. No disturbance of any kind occurred until, in April 1893, the telegraph wire was cut in the neighbourhood of Fort Victoria. It was supposed that the damage had been done by some Mashonas who inhabited a neighbouring kraal, and Dr. Jameson, who administered the affairs of the Company, imposed a fine of cattle. The fine was duly paid; but as the Mashona had no fancy for parting with their own cattle, they stole the required number from the Matabele.

News of the theft soon reached Lobengula; and though the Company offered to restore the cattle to their rightful owners, he was too angry to be appeased, and ordered out one of his impis to eat up the offending Mashona. At the same time he sent word to the Europeans in the district that they need not trouble themselves, as he had no quarrel with them, and merely intended to punish the thieves. But when the impi appeared, the Mashona rushed down to the fort for safety; and as the Matabele followed, killing all on whom they could lay hands, the gates were opened, and the unfortunate fugitives were admitted. The English thus became involved in the quarrel; and when, a day or two later, Dr. Jameson arrived at Victoria, he found that, as the Matabele were still on the warpath, the settlers were coming in from the outlying farms, and taking refuge at the fort.

A number of Mashona kraals had been destroyed, and the cattle belonging to at least one English settler had been driven away, but up to that time the Matabele

had so far kept their promise that no white man should receive personal injury. Raiding and cattle lifting, however, could not be allowed to continue; and Dr. Jameson told the indunas that if within one hour the impi had not started for Buluwayo, he should order out his forces. The indunas were sulky and disagreeable; but a couple of hours later, when Captain Lendy with a few men went out to reconnoitre, the only Matabele to be seen were about three hundred men who were attacking a hill occupied by a number of Mashona. As soon as the Englishmen appeared, the Matabele turned their fire upon them, though, when a volley from the reconnoitring party brought several of the warriors to the ground, the rest took to their heels.

This breach of the peace further complicated matters. Neither the Company's officers nor Lobengula wished for war; but while the settlers declared that they would not remain in a country where they were subject to Matabele raids, Lobengula refused to give any guarantee against a repetition of the offence, as he could not, he said, effectually restrain his young warriors. Neither party could, or would, give way, for each considered that it had rights, and was determined to maintain them at all costs. But on the other hand, though the dispute could not be peaceably decided, nobody was ready for war, and for several months hostilities were suspended. At the same time war preparations were pushed forward; the Company strengthened its forts, purchased ammunition and stores, and raised volunteer forces at Fort Salisbury and Fort Victoria.

Lobengula was also busy, though his preparations took a different form. He very honestly refused to accept the next £100 which fell due to him from

the Company, and he recalled one of his *impis* which had marched into the Barotse Valley with the view of eating up the inhabitants. The Barotse, however, defended themselves stubbornly, and the Matabele, who were in the habit of considering themselves invincible, found that for once they had run their heads into a hornet's nest. They lost heavily, and, to crown their misfortunes, smallpox broke out among them, and the *impi* returned from the raid in a dilapidated condition.

The ill luck which attended the Barotse expedition did not tend to bring the Matabele to a more peaceable frame of mind. At the end of September a couple of scouts sent out from Fort Victoria were attacked, and a few days afterwards a party of Matabele fired upon a patrol of the Bechuanaland Border Police in the neighbourhood of Macloutsie, and beyond the territory claimed by the Chartered Company. On both occasions it was discovered that the aggressors belonged to Matabele *impis* encamped near the scene of the attacks, and the High Commissioner, who had hitherto refused to sanction the advance of the Company's forces, now gave Dr. Jameson leave to take the field.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DOWNFALL OF LOBENGULA.

THE Company's forces took the field in two divisions, one of which advanced on Buluwayo from the north, while the other moved simultaneously from the south. The northern column, which consisted of the Fort Salisbury and Fort Victoria volunteers, commanded respectively by Major Forbes and Major Allan Wilson, a native contingent, and ten guns, including Maxims, concentrated at Iron Mine Hill on the seventeenth of October, and thence proceeded, under the general command of Major Forbes, towards the Shangani River.

The first few days of the march were not very eventful. The Matabele kept out of the way, and the military kraal, which was cautiously reconnoitred by a strong patrol, was found to be deserted. A few Matabele who were still prowling about the neighbourhood were made prisoners, the kraal was set on fire, and then, though no one was to be seen, movements and voices were heard. It was clear that an impi was concealed in the immediate neighbourhood, but the warriors refused to be tempted from their cover. Had they chosen to hold the ford of the Shangani, the task of dislodging them would have been no easy one. The idea, however, did

not occur to them; and on the twenty-fourth of October the force crossed the river, and camped on the farther side.

It was not a very good position, for the slope above the stream where the laagers were constructed was covered with patches of bush, which afforded a good deal of cover, and thickened considerably within a few hundred yards of the camp. The force camped in three divisions, each of which constructed its own laager, while the cattle occupied an enclosure between the camps of the Victoria and Salisbury volunteers. The laager of the native contingent was about eight hundred yards to the rear, and a number of cattle captured on the march occupied a scherm, or laager composed of bushes, about eighty yards to the rear of the other cattle enclosure. Every care was taken to strengthen the camp, and as a further precaution, sentries, both white and native, were posted.

For several hours all was quiet, but about four o'clock in the morning firing was heard near the native laager, and a few minutes afterwards the sentries came into camp. Scarcely had they done so when the ground which they had occupied in front of the camp was taken by a Matabele force, and in another minute showers of bullets whistled into and over the camp. The men replied steadily, though in the bad light it was no easy matter to distinguish the enemy, and one or two deplorable accidents occurred. When the fire began the natives in the rear lost their heads, and instead of keeping their positions, attempted to run to the other laagers; in so doing they unfortunately crossed the Maxims' line of fire, and several of them were shot.

Some of the Matabele attempted to charge, though only one or two of them managed to come within a hundred yards of the laager. The majority stayed in their cover; but the fire from the machine guns was too much for them, and as they showed signs of giving way, two troops of mounted men were sent to clear the ground, but being unsuccessful, were forced to retire. Firing then ceased for half an hour; and when the Matabele again advanced, the light had increased so much that the volunteers could see to aim properly.

A second impi came up, but before the new arrivals had time to attack, a seven-pounder was brought to bear upon them, and a detachment of cavalry was ordered out. As soon as the horsemen appeared in the open a number of Matabele sprang out, with the view of cutting off their retreat; but the men wheeled round and greeted them with a shower of bullets, which sent them flying in confusion towards the stream. Others then began to retreat, and it was supposed that the whole Matabele force had departed. When Captain Heany and a troop of cavalry went out to reconnoitre, however, they suddenly stumbled upon a reserve force of Matabele, and were driven in on the camp. Again the seven-pounder and a Maxim were trained on the enemy, and did such execution that before many shots had been fired the Matabele reserve also moved off, and the fight was at an end.

Notwithstanding frequent minor skirmishes with Matabele patrols the march continued steadily, and on the thirty-first of October the force reached some hilly, bush-clad country near the Imbembezi River. It was clear that the enemy was present in considerable force, for several times small parties were seen, some

of whom opened fire on the troops from a row of kopjes about half a mile from the line of march. A much stronger impi was seen shortly afterwards; but though the force laagered about a mile and a half from the kopjes, and the Matabele at first showed some disposition to attack, a few well-aimed shells caused them to change their minds, and the troops were allowed to pass a quiet night.

In the morning it was obvious that the Matabele were still in the neighbourhood, and as the country near the river was extremely difficult and afforded any amount of cover, Major Forbes decided to make a detour and cross the stream close to its source among the neighbouring hills. Though a good many natives were seen, they kept their distance; and about midday the volunteers reached the next camping-place, turned out their cattle and horses to graze, and began to construct laagers in broken country nearly a mile from the river. While the laagers were still in a very unfinished condition, a large number of Matabele appeared on a ridge about a mile and a half from the camp, and a few shells were fired at them. These, instead of causing them to retreat, had exactly the opposite effect, and they advanced rapidly towards the laager.

A few moments later one of the sentries galloped up with the news that another impi was coming through the bush less than half a mile distant, and in three minutes the finest regiments in the Matabele army rushed up and opened fire on the laager occupied by the Salisbury men. The cattle and horses were still at a considerable distance from the camp, and when the men in charge endeavoured to drive them

in they took fright, and stampeded in the direction of the impi, which promptly fired upon them. The horses then made off towards more open country; but Captain Sir John Willoughby and one or two other officers mounted some horses which, fortunately, were inside the laager, and went in pursuit of the runaways, who were eventually captured and brought back.

A furious battle was raging round the laager, and two magnificent Matabele regiments, the Imbeza and Ingubo, stood their ground most gallantly in the face of a deadly fire, which mowed down the men by hundreds. Though they were well supported by three or four other regiments, no pluck could withstand the terrible rain of bullets poured forth by the Maxims; and at last, most unwillingly, the Matabele began to give way. By two o'clock the fire had ceased, and as the cavalry turned out in pursuit, the enemy withdrew farther and farther into the bush, and in a short time was in full flight towards Buluwayo.

One regiment endeavoured to make a stand, but again a Maxim was brought forward with the same result as before, and thus the battle was won with a loss to the troops of one man killed and eight wounded, three of whom afterwards died. The Matabele, it was said, lost altogether from eight hundred to a thousand men. The victory practically ended the campaign, for after this second defeat Lobengula lost heart. Seeing that his two finest regiments were practically destroyed, he seems to have thought that it was useless to continue fighting; but rather than allow his kraal to fall into the hands of the Company's troops, he set fire to the huts, and retreated with all his movable property, including £1,000 in sovereigns.

He began his retreat two days after the battle at the Imbembezi, and as the column was then within a few miles of Buluwayo, the men were just in time to see the explosion of his magazine, in which it was rumoured about a hundred thousand cartridges were stored. The next day the force marched into Buluwayo, where no one remained except two white traders, whom the king had treated with the utmost kindness throughout the war.

The second column, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Gould Adams, was made up of white volunteers, Bechuanaland Border Police, and a Bechuana contingent under the command of King Khama. About the middle of October this force concentrated at Tati, where the camp was visited by an English trader named Dawson, who was conducting three of Lobengula's principal indunas to the High Commissioner, in the hope of making a peaceful settlement. Unfortunately, Mr. Dawson knew nothing of camp etiquette in time of war, and instead of reporting the arrival of his party, he left the indunas to their own devices while he obtained some refreshments and had a chat with his old friend Mr. Selous, who accompanied the force.

The indunas prowled sullenly about the camp, carrying their arms, and, as their mission was more or less a secret one, refusing to give any account of themselves. From the officers' point of view their conduct was so unsatisfactory that they were arrested, and sent in custody to the farther side of the river, though, at the same time, they were told that they should be released on the following day if a satisfactory explanation of their presence was forthcoming. The

indunas, knowing that their errand was a peaceful one, were naturally annoyed at treatment which they could not understand; and though they went quietly across the river, on reaching the other side two of them snatched up weapons, attacked the guard, and then took to their heels. They were killed almost immediately. But the third induna remained quiet, and on the following day went on with Mr. Dawson to Palapye, whence details of the affair were telegraphed to the High Commissioner.

From Tati the second column advanced leisurely towards Buluwayo, meeting with little opposition on the way. A few days before it reached its destination, King Khama, with the Bechuana contingent, withdrew from the force. Some of his men had caught small-pox from the Matabele; and as it was, moreover, the time for planting the crops, the Bechuana could not afford a longer absence from their homes. Just at the time that they left the column news reached Colonel Gould Adams that Major Forbes had captured Buluwayo, and that Lobengula was in full retreat. There was still a possibility that the advancing column might be attacked by one of his impis; but no Matabele were seen, and the force reached Buluwayo without molestation.

Though several messages had been sent to Lobengula, promising him safety if he would surrender, he showed no intention of complying, and Dr. Jameson directed Major Forbes to go in pursuit of the fugitive king with a force of volunteers and police. Major Wilson was in command of the volunteer contingent, and the patrol was provided with four Maxims and the pick of the horses belonging to the force. The stores were rather deficient, for though the Maxims had a good supply of

ammunition, only a hundred rounds was provided for each man, and the food supply was cut down to three days' half rations. Consequently, when the men had been out for eight days without finding the king, they became discontented. Some of the Mashonaland volunteers desired to be released, and Major Forbes gave them leave to return from Shiloh, where he received a reinforcement of a hundred men, and obtained a supply of provisions and ammunition.

The rainy season had now begun, and soon after the force left Shiloh the heavy ground and the flooded state of many of the streams made it impossible to take most of the Maxims farther. The wagons also could not advance, and the column was obliged to proceed without its baggage train and with only two Maxims mounted on light carriages. Encouraging news, however, was received, for some prisoners captured by a scouting party stated that on the twentieth of November Lobengula had been only eighteen miles ahead of the spot reached by the column before lack of supplies obliged it to halt at Shiloh. It was clear, too, that the king's spoor, or track, had at last been struck, for the remains of several of his wagons were seen on the wayside.

Following the spoor the column reached the Shangani River on the third of December, and learned that Lobengula and his party were encamped in scherns on the farther side of the stream. One or two prisoners who were taken confirmed the report that the king was in the immediate neighbourhood, stating further that he was guarded by three regiments, including the remains of the Ingubo, which had fought so gallantly at the Imbembezi.

The Shangani was still low, and Major Wilson proposed to cross the stream and reconnoitre the king's position. Twenty men, including two American scouts named Burnham and Ingram, having volunteered to accompany him, the party set off at sunset, and soon came in contact with the enemy ensconced in roughly-constructed scherms. The men entered into conversation with some of the Matabele, and telling them that they wanted to see the king, asked them to point out Lobengula's position. One man consented to do so, and led the patrol through the forest to an open valley where a number of Matabele were encamped. There were a good many armed men among them, but apparently they were too much surprised at the boldness of Wilson and his little party to make any attack, and the patrol, having advanced to the very spot where the king's wagons were outspanned, shouted for Lobengula.

No one answered, though a number of fires were burning and armed men came out of the scherm, while at the same time others ran up from the rear. Darkness had set in, and a thunderstorm was rapidly coming up, a fact which rather assisted Wilson than otherwise, as the flashes of lightning revealed the enemy, who otherwise would probably have succeeded in surrounding and cutting off the patrol. As it was, the men were able to retire, and riding off separately into the forest, they made their way unobserved through the natives and reassembled in the open valley, where they halted by the side of a white-ant hill in order to discuss their position. Rain was now falling in torrents, and the men were almost worn out by fatigue, as many of them had been on horseback for forty hours; but no

shelter was available, and a miserable night was passed.

Natives were heard moving in the neighbourhood, and in the morning, just as day broke, a small reinforcement of twenty men came up from Major Forbes's party. Another consultation was held, for no doubt remained that the enemy had cut off the retreat of the patrol. It was believed that an attempt to rejoin the main column would entail running the gauntlet of several Matabele regiments, and Wilson decided to march northward, in the hope of eventually falling in with Major Forbes. With this purpose he again advanced to the king's wagons; but the Matabele sallied out, and a sharp fight began.

The chances were entirely in favour of the natives. They were at least three times as numerous as Wilson's party, and had any amount of available reinforcements. Moreover, they were fighting from cover, while the British were in the open, with no shelter except such as was afforded by a monster ant-hill, from the top of which Wilson coolly directed operations. After a heavy fire had continued for some minutes, a fresh detachment of Matabele joined in the attack, and the patrol then began to retire. The Matabele ceased firing, but it was evident that more fighting was to be expected; and seeing that the situation was desperate, Wilson asked Burnham and Ingram to try to make their way through to the main column and request Major Forbes to come up at once, as he and his men were "nearly finished."

The two rode off only just in time, for a few minutes after they started the Matabele closed in. The British knew there was little chance that the column could

come up in time, but they could at least sell their lives dearly; and forming their horses into a circle, so as to afford some protection, they stood at bay until their small store of ammunition was almost exhausted, and many of the men and all the horses had fallen. When only one or two charges remained in the revolvers, the survivors stood up, and taking off their hats, solemnly sang a song which, from the description of the induna who afterwards told the story of the fight, seems to have been "God Save the Queen."

Such a death-song was utterly incomprehensible to the Matabele, and supposing it to be witchcraft, they feared to rush in until the singing came to an end. Then they charged, and springing in overwhelming numbers on the few white men who still lived, they shot or assegaied them as they stood, in the midst of a ring of dead Matabele.

Burnham and Ingram, after a most difficult ride, succeeded in reaching the Shangani, which, owing to the rain, had risen suddenly into a roaring torrent. They contrived to swim across, but when they reached Forbes they found that a brisk fight was in progress. By the time the enemy was driven off, the stream had risen still higher, and Forbes was not able to cross, though he could still hear firing from the direction of Wilson's party. But it was impossible to render assistance, for the Matabele were in such strong force that the column was compelled to retreat to Buluwayo without knowing for certain what had happened on the farther bank, and many days passed before the fate of the patrol was ascertained.

Though Lobengula was still at liberty, he was too ill to make further resistance, and he fled to a swampy

district about forty miles south of the Zambesi. There he died in January 1894, and some time later the authorities learned that both the death of the king and the sad fate of Wilson's party were really due to the treachery of two Bechuana Police scouts. Weeks before, Lobengula, finding that he had no chance of ultimate success, had sent envoys with his £1,000 as a peace-offering to his pursuers. On the way his messengers fell in with the two scouts and gave them the money, naturally supposing that they would honestly convey it to headquarters. But the scouts were unfaithful to their trust; they pocketed the money and said nothing of the matter. When the story came to light the offenders were sentenced to fourteen years penal servitude. But it was then too late to save the lives of Wilson and his party, or of the generous Matabele king, who, throughout the war, had never ill-treated a European who trusted to his good faith.

Lobengula's death put an end to the Matabele opposition, for most of his people, though they probably had no real liking for the English, settled down quietly under the Company's rule. Matabeleland and Mashonaland were united under the name of Rhodesia, and the seat of government was fixed at Salisbury. A flourishing town also sprang up at Buluwayo; and when, after a few months, Matabeleland was erected into a distinct province, with a magistrate of its own, his residence was fixed in the new township which occupied the site of Lobengula's royal kraal.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE UITLANDERS AND DR. JIM.

FOR a good many years before the British annexed the Transvaal it was known that gold existed in the country. The Boers, however, were by nature and education a pastoral race. They cared nothing whatever for mining, and their farms furnished them with all the wealth which their simple tastes demanded. They were perfectly satisfied with their country as it was, and the government had so little desire for alteration that in 1854, when the first gold discoveries were reported, a law was passed forbidding further prospecting, under pain of heavy penalties. The subject, therefore, dropped, and nothing more was heard of the Transvaal gold until, in 1867, the German explorer Mauch, who discovered the Zimbabwe ruins, did a little prospecting on his own account in the north of the republic. He discovered gold in several places; and the government, having apparently become alive to the advantages of mineral wealth, withdrew the prohibition against mining, and offered every encouragement to prospectors.

The consequence was that further investigations were made, and the gold-mining industry so far devel-

oped that in 1872 the Volksraad declared all mineral rights state property, and offered rewards for the discovery of new gold mines. Most of the gold worked at that time lay in alluvial beds; but though some large nuggets were found, no great numbers of people were attracted to the country.

With the restoration of the republic gold-mining revived, and in 1882 valuable gold reefs were discovered on and around the De Kaap plateau. As the valuable nature of the deposits became more widely known, companies were formed, and for the first time gold became an important export. The new mines, however, were of a different character from the old ones, for the De Kaap gold took the form of quartz ore, which could only be crushed by using expensive machinery.

So much excitement was caused by the discoveries that prospectors set to work more actively than before, and in 1886 fifteen men formed themselves into a party to seek their fortune as gold-diggers. As none of them were wealthy enough to be able to live on their own resources until they succeeded in finding gold, eleven of them undertook to work as storekeepers, and so support the other four, who were deputed to prospect on behalf of the whole number. At first their affairs did not prosper. The stores did not pay particularly well, and as for six months the prospectors did not succeed in finding any gold worth mentioning, the partners were hard put to it to find the means of carrying on their enterprise.

One day, however, when one of the prospectors was passing along a track which all the party had been using for weeks, he chanced to knock off a piece of

rock which stuck out of the ground a few yards from the path. Something unusual in its appearance attracted his attention, and it flashed upon him that at last he had found the long-sought gold. When the rock was tested his idea was found to be correct, for the accidentally-discovered reef proved to be exceedingly rich; and as working capital was required, a limited liability company was formed, and fifteen thousand one-pound shares were issued. When the publication of the results of the first crushings proclaimed to the world that the ore yielded about eight ounces of gold to the ton, the value of the shares went up with a bound, and in the course of a few months they were quoted at from £50 to £90.

A rush to the mines began, and as the gold fever spread all over South Africa, eager gold-seekers hurried to De Kaap by every possible means of conveyance. It seemed almost as though another trek were in progress, and in less than a year ten thousand men had assembled at the diggings. A mushroom town sprang up, and received the name of Barberton; but in the course of a year or two people discovered that they had rushed too eagerly into gold-digging. A number of bogus mines had been started by unscrupulous speculators, and several genuine mines had not sufficient working capital to pay expenses. Consequently, the prosperity of Barberton began to wane; and though some of the speculators succeeded, many began to look elsewhere for wealth.

As the De Kaap mines decreased in attractiveness, a new gold-field was opened up on the Witwatersrand. Gold was first discovered in the locality in 1885, and though up to that time the Rand, as it soon came

to be called, had consisted of a tract of rather bare and dreary grazing country, the richness of the newly-found reefs entirely altered the condition of the locality. Quartz-crushing machinery was brought up, deep shafts were sunk to meet the reef, which ran at a descending inclination from the surface, and the town of Johannesburg sprang up from the few wooden shanties which in 1889 were scattered around the principal mines. Streets and squares were laid out; magnificent buildings were constructed; trees were planted; a racecourse was made; churches, hotels, and clubs were built; tram lines were laid; electric lighting was introduced; and ten years after the first building lot was sold in 1886, Johannesburg, the "Gold Reef City," had a white population of about forty thousand persons.

Though the discovery of the gold raised the annual revenue of the republic from something like £75,000 to about £2,000,000, it was not productive of internal peace. The advent of thousands of immigrants was regarded by the Boers with some apprehension. They had no wish that others should find a home among them, or have a voice in the government of the country.

When the gold rush began the franchise was remarkably low; but dread of interference caused the government to raise the requirements, until it became a very long and difficult task for foreigners or Uitlanders to obtain any political rights whatever. More than once the Uitlanders appealed for redress; and with the view, in some degree, of meeting their wishes, a second Volksraad was created in 1890. Its powers, however, were very limited, and as the right of veto remained with the first Raad, the measure failed to give satisfac-

tion. Moreover, the Uitlanders considered that their principal grievance was still unabated, for they could not become citizens of the South African Republic without entirely renouncing their allegiance to their own country. Even after becoming naturalized they were forced to serve a long probation before they were qualified to vote or to hold any government office. Coloured people were not regarded as, in any sense, the equals of white men; they were altogether excluded from political rights, and were not allowed to hold land in their own names.

Though the Boers did not take the slightest interest in mining as an occupation, they wished the produce of the mines to benefit themselves. But the Uitlanders, who composed the whole mining population, could not be expected to care very much about a republic in the government of which they had no part. Few of them therefore settled in the country with the view of making it their permanent home; and as mining experts declared that the existing gold-fields would be worked out at no very distant period, there was little prospect that the Uitlanders would then continue to flock into the Transvaal. Taking this view of the case, the burghers considered it reasonable to arrange a scheme of taxation by which almost the whole burden fell on the Uitlanders, while the Boers, who were engaged almost to a man in pastoral and agricultural pursuits, were let off very lightly indeed.

The Uitlanders regarded the matter from a totally different standpoint. They argued that, as they were the people who had raised the Transvaal from poverty to affluence, they had a right to be represented in the government, and to have some voice in arranging the

application of the revenue of which they were the producers. Moreover, they considered that the raising of the franchise was in itself a grievance and a breach of faith, for President Kruger had promised Sir Evelyn Wood in 1881 that the same civil rights should be accorded to British subjects as were enjoyed by the burghers themselves. President Kruger replied that he had kept his promise, because, notwithstanding the restrictions, the franchise had been offered to those Uitlanders who consented to take the burden of military service under the republic. This, however, few of them had cared to do, as they did not wish to be commandeered whenever the government fell out with one or other of the native tribes.

As the grievances remained unredressed the relations between the Uitlanders and the Transvaal government became strained. The Uitlanders continued to agitate; but their petitions were practically disregarded, in a manner which gave them the deepest offence. One petition, bearing 13,000 signatures, is reported to have been received with scornful laughter in the Volksraad. A few months later another petition, signed by 38,000 Uitlanders, was in like manner rejected; and on that occasion one member of the Raad challenged the petitioners to fight for the desired privilege.

Up to that time the Uitlanders had confined themselves to strictly peaceful and constitutional methods of obtaining redress, but finding that these were unavailing, some of the people began to contemplate more forcible measures. At the same time one of the leading Uitlanders stated at a meeting of the Transvaal National Union that "the position had been endured, and was likely to be endured still longer." About a

month later, on December 27, 1895, the Union issued a manifesto which, though it called for reform, did not in any way advocate an appeal to force. After setting forth the grievances from which the Uitlanders suffered, it ended by expressing a desire for an "independent republic which shall be a true republic, in which every man who takes the oath of allegiance to the state shall have equal rights, and in which our children shall be brought up side by side as united members of a strong commonwealth. We are animated by no race hatred; we desire to deprive no man, be his nationality what it may, of any right."

This pacific declaration immediately preceded an appeal to arms; and before the end of the year Dr. Jameson, with six Maxims and an armed force between four and five hundred strong, entered the Transvaal. It so happened that earlier in the year a readjustment of the Bechuanaland boundary had given additional territory to the Chartered Company, and had brought a number of the men formerly in the Bechuanaland Border Police under the immediate control of "Dr. Jim," as he was familiarly called. In addition to his own men he had also sundry volunteers from Cape Colony, and his force was officered by Sir John Willoughby, Colonels White and Grey, Majors White and Hon. C. Coventry, and about twenty-five subordinate officers.

The force marched quickly towards Johannesburg with short halts for rest and refreshments, and after a brush with the Boers while passing through some kopjes on the night of the thirty-first of December, reached Krugersdorp about midday on January 1, 1896. There the raiders found themselves confronted by a strong force of Boers entrenched on a fortified kopje.

The artillery failed to dislodge the defenders, and Dr. Jim's men were ordered to charge. But apparently the order was misunderstood, for only about twenty-five advanced on the position, while fifty others worked round with the view of making a flank attack. Both parties were greeted by a heavy fire, which forced them to withdraw; and as the attack proved a failure, the force laagered for the night, in the full expectation of receiving a reinforcement from Johannesburg in the course of the morning.

The news of the raid created a profound sensation both in England and in Cape Colony. Mr. Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, wired to Sir Hercules Robinson, the High Commissioner at the Cape, to stop the raid and forbid all British subjects in the Transvaal to give any assistance whatever to Dr. Jameson. A reply was received to the effect that the message had been delivered, but that it was disregarded by Dr. Jim, who replied that, having no food supplies, he was forced to advance, though he added that "he was anxious to fulfil his promise, on the petition of the principal residents in the Rand, to come to the aid of his fellow-men in their extremity."

The night passed quietly, but the Boers were still on the watch; and in the morning, when the force unlaagered, preparatory to making a dash for Johannesburg, another attack was made. Several men were killed and wounded, but the rest managed to get away, and rode rapidly towards Johannesburg, hotly pursued by the Boers, who kept up a running fire all the way to Doornkop, where further advance was barred by a strong force of burghers. Another pitched battle began, but before either side had gained any decisive advan-

tage, Dr. Jameson received a communication from the Imperial Government ordering him to retire immediately to the frontier.

On receipt of this command the doctor ordered his trumpeters to sound the "cease fire," and a white flag—consisting of a piece of lint supplied by the surgeon—was hoisted. When the raiders thus surrendered they were immediately made prisoners and marched to Krugersdorp, while ambulances were sent out to fetch in the wounded.

On hearing of the result of the raid the Uitlanders again became restive, and wanted to take up arms to release Dr. Jim and his companions. Sir Hercules Robinson, however, persuaded them to abstain from fighting, and they were given to understand that if no further disturbance was made the Transvaal government would hand over Dr. Jameson and his companions to the Imperial Government, to be tried in England for a breach of the neutrality laws. At the same time a promise was given that the lives of the reform leaders in Johannesburg should be safe, and that some of the grievances of the Uitlanders should be forthwith redressed.

The matter, however, was not yet ended, for on the tenth of January the Uitlander leaders were arrested at Johannesburg on a charge of high treason. While they were awaiting their trial the raiders were sent to England, where, after a full investigation, they were all found guilty and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. The reform leaders, on the other hand, were tried at Pretoria and sentenced to death; but the death sentence was remitted, and the punishment of the four principal leaders was commuted to fifteen

years imprisonment and a fine of £25,000 apiece. Fifty-nine others who were more or less implicated were heavily fined. The greater part of the imprisonment was afterwards remitted, but the offenders were required to give their word of honour not to interfere further with Transvaal politics. Colonel Rhodes, the brother of Mr. C. J. Rhodes, flatly refused to give any promise of the sort, and consequently was banished from the republic.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE MATABELE REVOLT.

AFTER the death of Lobengula affairs in Rhodesia for a time went on quietly, though the Matabele did not regard themselves as really conquered. They looked upon the expedition rather as a raid in which they had been worsted than as a war in which they had been conquered, and it was probably a matter of surprise to them when the Chartered Company treated them as a vanquished race. From a European standpoint they were better off than they had ever been under the rule of Lobengula; their lives and property were safe, and they were in no danger of being "smelt out" as witches. But in the eyes of the Matabele the advantages of the new order were balanced, if not outweighed, by the disadvantages. Raiding was summarily stopped, and under the rule of the Company all the young men were required to work at a certain fixed rate of wages during several months of the year, instead of spending their time in war, hunting, and idleness, as their own inclinations prompted them to do. Another grievance was the establishment of native police, who were often employed to enforce the labour regulations, and in other ways which made them more or less obnoxious to their countrymen.

A still greater grievance was the course taken by the Company's officials with regard to the disposal of the cattle belonging to the Matabele. There was an idea, which to a great extent was correct, that the animals were really the property of the king, who merely allowed his subjects to make use of them. Under this impression, all the cattle in the country were confiscated by the Company, who took what they wanted, and branded the rest with their own mark, though the Matabele were still allowed to herd them and make use of them. This arrangement was made subject to the claims of the Company, which reserved the right to requisition cattle whenever they were required for government purposes, though at the same time the Matabele were told that no cattle owned by private individuals would be confiscated. It was supposed, when the promise was given, that there were very few such owners in the country, and that, therefore, nobody would be wronged. It was afterwards proved, however, that private owners were numerous, and they not unnaturally regarded the wholesale confiscation as a hardship and a breach of faith on the part of the Company.

In spite of the unpopular innovations, the bulk of the people, who were used to being put upon by the king, regarded the change of government with apparent complacency. The indunas were less pleased; they were removed from power and placed in subordinate positions, and those who had been the leaders of the dominant race in the country found themselves treated by the white men as not only a conquered but as an inferior people. Nothing could be more galling to their pride, and though for a year or two they made no

remonstrance, discontent was brewing, and they were merely biding their time, and waiting for a favourable opportunity to overthrow the Company's rule. It appears that they were working quietly towards the attainment of their object, and it is believed that they found means of turning to account the native belief in the Umlimo, or divinity worshipped by the Matabele, in common with several neighbouring tribes.

Who or what the Umlimo was nobody could explain. He was represented by a sort of hereditary priesthood, which had its headquarters in the rugged Matoppo Hills, where, in a certain cave which served as a temple, he might be consulted, and was also open to receive presents through the medium of his human representatives.

Matters had reached this stage when, in February 1896, a terrible disease, known as rinderpest, appeared among the cattle. It had been raging for some time in the districts north of the Zambezi, and when it was brought into Matabeleland by a trader whose team was infected, the contagion spread with alarming rapidity. Whole herds of cattle were destroyed; transport became almost impossible; and at last, with the view of stamping out the disease, the Company ordered the slaughter of thousands of cattle which were at the time perfectly sound. The measure was not understood by the Matabele, and though compensation was given to all owners whose stock was slaughtered, they supposed that the Company's object was to bring about their ruin.

At last the smouldering discontent burst into flame, and on the twentieth of March a native police patrol was assaulted by a party of Matabele. The natives

began by endeavouring to provoke the police to fight them; and failing in this, one of them crept round, apparently with the intention of making a rear attack. The police sprang up to defend themselves, and the cowardly assailant was arrested and handcuffed. Almost before he had been secured, another of the Matabele fired; but his aim was defective, and instead of shooting a policeman, he only succeeded in killing the man who had just been arrested. The rest of the natives then ran away; but while the police were considering what to do, a volley was fired, and a boy who acted as servant and porter was killed.

The attack on the police patrol was the signal for a general outbreak, and in the course of a few days a number of murders were committed, and many of the native police made common cause with their countrymen.

News of the outbreak now spread rapidly over the country, and from many of the outlying farms and mining settlements men, women, and children hurried down to Buluwayo, where an extensive and very strong laager was constructed. Within this the whole population was gathered every night, while in other parts of the country small laagers were formed by those who, for one reason or another, were unable to come into Buluwayo.

Unfortunately, Rhodesia was at that time almost without any organized military force. There were no troops in the country. Dr. Jameson and his companions had been captured by the Boers, and for the time being the police force was practically dispersed. This, of course, was well known to the Matabele, and may very probably have had much to do with their selection of that particular season for the revolt.

But though there were no regular troops, the colonists did not intend either to surrender the land to its former owners, or to wait quietly in their laagers until the Matabele might see fit to attack them. Volunteer corps were raised at Buluwayo, and under the command of various energetic leaders made spirited dashes into the enemy's territory, while a strong force under the command of Colonel Spreckley was told off to garrison the Buluwayo laager.

On Tuesday, the twenty-fourth of March, news reached Buluwayo that a small party of Englishmen were besieged in a laager in a trading-station called Cumming's store, and a number of men under the command of the Hon. Maurice Gifford immediately turned out to relieve them. Twenty-six miles out from Buluwayo, the party came upon a deserted wagon, which had evidently been attacked by the Matabele, for the team of donkeys lay dead in harness, and the drivers were not to be seen, though it was afterwards discovered that they had been murdered. A few miles farther on, three colonial natives—or, as they are commonly called, boys, no matter what their age may be—informed Mr. Gifford that all the natives near the Insiza River had risen against the English, and that several murders had been committed. It was clear that there was no time to be lost, and hurrying on, the volunteers reached Cumming's store on Thursday night. A few hours later the place was attacked, but though the Matabele fought with the most determined pluck, the white men's shooting was too good for them, and they were driven off after losing twenty-five of their number.

Mr. Selous led a party to reconnoitre the Matoppo

Hills, where it was believed that the Matabele were assembled in strong force. As the men advanced into the hills a few of the enemy were seen, and a sharp skirmish began. The Matabele, however, were not disposed to stand and fight; and as Mr. Selous and his men approached, they drew back towards a kraal which contained a number of cattle. They did not make much attempt to defend their property, and dodged behind rocks, taking occasional shots at the volunteers.

The cattle were a tempting prize, and Selous determined to drive them to Buluwayo. It was easy enough to get them out of the kraal, but all attempts to induce them to move in the desired direction were fruitless. While the men were busy trying to collect them, the Matabele took the opportunity of returning to the position from which they had been ousted, and began firing from their hiding-places among the stones. Fortunately, they were not good marksmen, and they only succeeded in hitting two men and four horses; but as it was quite uncertain how strong their force might be, Selous withdrew his men from the hills; and after a rest in a convenient open space, where the enemy could not approach them unseen, they retired across country to Buluwayo.

A skirmish now became an everyday occurrence, and notwithstanding the energetic work of the patrols, the Matabele gradually closed in around Buluwayo. On the sixteenth of April they had approached within a few miles of the town, and the volunteers found it necessary to give up their distant reconnaissances, and confine themselves to skirmishing in the neighbourhood of the laager. A good deal of sharp fighting took

place, which afforded opportunity for many acts of individual courage and daring; and on the twenty-fifth of April a strong patrol commanded by Captain Macfarlane gave the Matabele their first decided check, and caused them to withdraw from the immediate neighbourhood of Buluwayo.

Meanwhile, a relief column, commanded by Colonel Plumer, and accompanied by Mr. C. J. Rhodes, was coming down from Salisbury to assist the colonists. A few days after their arrival, Colonel Plumer, with the assistance of a detachment of the Buluwayo Field Force, as the volunteers were called, again defeated the Matabele. This time they were driven from a strong post on some thickly-wooded hills near the Unguza River, and an hour or two later were forced to retire from a position defended by two deep ravines. Colonel Plumer and his men camped for the night on the spot last vacated by the Matabele, who took advantage of the darkness to make their escape.

Early in June, a British force, commanded by Major-General Sir Frederick Carrington, arrived at Buluwayo, and it was then thought desirable to disband the volunteer force. It continued to exist, however, until the fourth of July, when, after a formal inspection, the troops were addressed by Earl Grey, who had succeeded Dr. Jameson as Administrator of Rhodesia. He spoke in most complimentary terms of the services which they had rendered, and in dismissing them expressed a hope that the members of the force would receive medals similar to those which were being struck for the men who served in the Matabele War of 1893.

The force commanded by Colonel Plumer still continued in the field, and on the fifth of July his column

attacked the kopjes near Inyati, and succeeded in driving the Matabele from their position. But still they were by no means defeated, and as they were gradually driven from other defences, they concentrated their forces in the Matoppos Hills. This range, though not specially lofty, was so rugged that, from the attacking party's point of view, it was by no means an ideal place for campaigning. As a stronghold it was almost perfect, for the hills were scored by deep gorges, honey-combed with caves, and studded with almost inaccessible rocks and boulders. There was plenty of cover from which an advancing army could be picked off with very little danger to the men holding the position. But unless the Matoppos stronghold was captured there was no chance of reducing the Matabele to order.

Sir Frederick, therefore, planned an attack on the Matoppos, and at half-past ten on the evening of the nineteenth of July a column commanded by Colonel Plumer was directed to advance into the hills. Scrambling cautiously among the rocks, the men made their way to a valley where it was known that the Matabele were encamped, and as the party followed the spoor, the number of footmarks made it plain that the enemy was in strong force. All noise was forbidden, and just as dawn was breaking, the column took up its position on a point which commanded the enemy's camp, the guns were brought forward, and before the Matabele found out that they were attacked, a storm of shells rattled down among them.

Utterly surprised, they forthwith began to retreat, apparently not having discovered that there was a fairly strong force in the immediate neighbourhood. Consequently, while their backs were turned, and they

were selecting good positions in the kopjes around the valley, Plumer's men worked round and took possession of the original stronghold. Not a single rebel remained in the place, which was naturally well defended, and was rendered more complicated by a labyrinth of caves, whose mouths were generally fortified with rocks. Most of the caves appeared to be untenanted, but another stronghold of very similar construction, on the farther side of the valley, was occupied by the enemy. It was scarcely a pleasant place to attack, but the force, which included a number of Cape "boys," gradually made its way up the valley, and under cover of the guns worked like ferrets in a rabbit warren, bolting the Matabele from their caves, and gradually clearing the place.

Several of Plumer's men were killed, but in a few hours the enemy was in full retreat, and one of the most important Matabele strongholds had been broken up. For some days desultory fighting continued, and on the second of August the men discovered a cave which had apparently served as a granary and storehouse. A vast quantity of grain of various kinds was found neatly packed up in large grass baskets, and after taking possession of it the patrol advanced farther into the hills to a recently-deserted scherm, which was promptly destroyed.

Two days later, an old woman brought in news that five impis were assembled in a strong position near the camp. Here was a chance for inflicting a decisive blow, more especially as it appeared that the Matabele, who had considered the Matoppos impregnable, were greatly depressed by their recent reverses. They also wanted to sow their fields; and while they were shut

up in the mountains all farming operations were out of the question. Most of the people were therefore becoming more peaceably disposed, though a few of the indunas were still anxious to continue the war.

Colonel Plumer prepared for an immediate attack, and before daylight on the fifth of August the men marched silently out of camp, and, as the sun rose, reached a curiously-shaped valley, broken by five projecting spurs connected by a long ridge. The top of the connecting ridge commanded both the valley and the spurs; and seeing this, Colonel Plumer sent the guns up the ridge, with the view of shelling the enemy's stronghold. This plan worked perfectly, though it was not a particularly easy matter to advance up the steep, rocky slope. In about an hour the guns reached a position from which they could conveniently shell the first spur; but this time the enemy had some idea that an attack was in contemplation, and opened a brisk fire on the gun escort.

Meanwhile, the main column was advancing into the valley, and as the guns drove the Matabele from the open to the shelter of the spurs, the men skirmished up the slopes, driving the enemy before them. As soon as one spur was cleared another was attacked, and by three in the afternoon not a native remained in the valley.

This disaster at last broke the spirit of the Matabele; desultory skirmishing went on for a few days, and then they sent messengers under a white flag to ask for an "indaba," or consultation. Their request was granted, and on the twenty-seventh of August Mr. Rhodes and two other Europeans went into the hills to meet the chiefs. The three white men interviewed about forty

natives, listened to the tale of their grievances, and promised to right their wrongs, on condition that the nation should lay down its arms and submit. The chiefs expressed their willingness to do as Mr. Rhodes suggested; but it was some time before they could bring their people to agree to the terms, and the final surrender was not made until the thirteenth of October.

Before the disturbances in Matabeleland were at an end Sir Frederick Carrington had to turn his attention to Mashonaland, where a revolt had broken out on the sixteenth of June. Peaceful settlers, farmers, and miners were cruelly murdered, for the Mashona were under the impression that all the whites in Matabeleland had been killed, and that it would therefore not be difficult to destroy those who remained in Mashonaland. This idea they soon found to be wholly mistaken, for the colonists took up arms in their own defence, and the troops came up to assist in restoring order. Patrolling went on vigorously; kraals were burnt; hill fortresses, similar to those in Matabeleland, were captured; cave strongholds were destroyed; and chief after chief was driven ignominiously to submit.

The campaign lasted several months, and then by degrees the Mashona settled down once more into peaceable, ordinary modes of life, and everything augured well for peace. The natives were at last thoroughly beaten, and Lord Grey clinched the matter by pointing out the uselessness of fighting the white men, who had come to stay. Very soon, he said, the railway would be brought up to Buluwayo; and then, if need occurred, white troops could be poured into the country without delay or difficulty. He promised,

however, that all grievances should, as far as possible, be redressed, and assured the people that certain chiefs should be reinstated with limited powers under the general control of a commissioner. The scheme, though not precisely what the natives liked, was accepted by them after some hesitation, and peace once more reigned supreme in Rhodesia.

Meanwhile, the railway was steadily creeping northward from Mafeking, and on the nineteenth of October the iron horse steamed for the first time into Buluwayo. The formal opening of the line took place on the fourth of November, amid general rejoicings, into which the natives entered as heartily as the whites, since they were told that the railway would be used in the importation of a new stock of cattle to replace those lost by reason of the rinderpest.

But Mr. Rhodes was not yet satisfied, for his scheme for opening up Africa included the construction of a railway and telegraph from the Cape to Cairo. By the end of 1897 Salisbury had telegraphic communication with Buluwayo, the chief commercial centre, and Beira, the nearest seaport, and railways connecting the three towns were in course of construction. Civilization was thus brought to the doors of Rhodesia, and, as a speaker remarked at the opening of the railway at Buluwayo, "the ultimate supremacy of the white man in Matabeleland is assured."

CHAPTER XIX.

GATHERING WAR CLOUDS.

AFTER Doctor Jameson's ill-starred raid into the Transvaal the political condition of the Uitlanders improved so little that early in 1899, as their wrongs were still unabated, they petitioned the Queen for redress. The outcome of the petition was a conference held at Bloemfontein, where the matter was fully discussed by the British High Commissioner, Sir Alfred Milner, and Mr. Kruger, the President of the South African Republic. They failed, however, to agree; the conference broke up, and a lengthy correspondence followed. But the negotiations did not prosper; after each communication relations between the two governments became more strained; day by day the outlook appeared graver; and though there were still those who hoped that a peaceable solution of the difficulty might be found, by the end of September war clouds were steadily settling down upon South Africa.

Preparations for war had already been taken in hand, and early in August the Boers, who for some time had secretly been arming, began openly to purchase mules, prepare armoured trains, and issue rifles to the burghers; while, on the other hand, British troops were moved

from the Cape to Natal; a portion of the force in India was warned to prepare for service in Africa; Colonel Baden-Powell began to enlist a volunteer force at Buluwayo; and at a meeting held at Maritzburg it was resolved that "it is the duty of every able-bodied colonist who can shoot and ride to come forward to assist in the defence of Natal against invasion."

During the latter part of August and the first weeks of September, warlike preparations were steadily carried forward by both parties. Armed Boers assembled in various parts of the republic, and gradually advanced towards the frontier. On the western side camps were formed at Maribogo and Lichtenburg, and though some of the frontier forces, commanded by Colonel Baden-Powell, were stationed at Ramathlabama, the local burghers, who all went about armed, adopted a very threatening attitude towards British residents in the district. On the Natal side, also, Boers patrolled the Buffalo River, quick-firing guns were brought down to Volksrust, and camps were established on the Pangwana Mountain, and at Sandspruit, in the neighbourhood of Laing's Nek. At the same time the agitation communicated itself to the British subjects resident in Johannesburg and other towns in the South African Republic. A general exodus began, hundreds of people left their homes, and trains were crowded with refugees on their way to Cape Colony and Natal.

Great Britain in the meantime was not idle. Troops were ordered to proceed to South Africa from England, Malta, Egypt, and India; transports were chartered; horses and mules were purchased; various munitions of war were made ready at Woolwich, Waltham Abbey, Bombay, and other depots; armoured trains were con-

structed; additional troops were sent up to Ladysmith; and the Red Cross Society offered its services for ambulance work. The colonies also expressed their readiness to take up the cudgels on behalf of the mother country, and Australia, New Zealand, and Canada volunteered to send contingents.

On the twenty-first of September a third party entered the dispute. By a treaty concluded at Potchefstroom in 1888, the South African Republic and the Orange Free State stood pledged to "render one another mutual support with all available powers and means whenever the independence of one or both may be threatened or attacked, unless the state who may have to render the assistance establishes the injustice of the cause of the other state." In the opinion of the Free State burghers, the contingency for which provision was thus made had arisen, and the Volksraad unanimously decided that "come what may, the Orange Free State will honestly and faithfully fulfil its obligations towards the South African Republic by virtue of the political alliance between the two countries." At the same time, however, the government was instructed to endeavour to maintain peace.

Still British troops continued to pour into South Africa, and in the last week of September a force arrived at Dundee, a station a few miles from the frontier of the republic. The Boers, likewise, continued their warlike preparations; and while the burghers mustered at various points on the Natal frontier, the British strengthened the force at Dundee, and formed a strong camp at Craigside, about half way between that place and Glencoe Junction.

On the seventh of October, Lieutenant-General Sir

George White, V.C., who had been appointed to the command of the Natal Field Force, arrived with his staff at Durban. He was received by General Sir W. Penn Symons, who came down from the camp at Glencoe to meet him, and without loss of time the whole party started for Maritzburg, amid a chorus of cheers and shouts of "Remember Majuba."

Colonel Baden-Powell and his assistants, Colonels Plumer and Vyvyan, had meanwhile been busy. Armoured trains were prepared; a camp was formed at Tuli; at Mafeking and Vryburg the volunteers were called out; arms were issued to all the able-bodied men; target practice was begun; and a large staff of ladies volunteered as Red Cross nurses.

By this time a warlike spirit was rapidly spreading through the republics, and the Boers vented their ill-will on the refugees who still crowded the trains. So great was the rush that hundreds of people had to travel in cattle trucks, with barely room to stand and no possibility of sitting down, while at Johannesburg station crowds of panic-stricken fugitives struggled and fought for tickets. Numerous complaints of outrages on travellers reached British territory; and as it was almost impossible to procure refreshments on the way, many of those who omitted to take provisions arrived in the colonies in a half-famished condition.

On Saturday, the seventh of October, the War Office issued a special army order calling out the Reserves. At the same time it was announced that a field force for service in South Africa would be mobilized at once, while men whose time of service with the colours was about to expire were ordered to continue with their regiments. General Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., was ap-

pointed to the chief command; and the ninth of October was declared to be the first day of mobilization. The force thus ordered for service was altogether more than fifty-two thousand strong, and transports were chartered from several of the large steamship companies to convey troops and war materials to South Africa. But still certain "proposals for a final settlement," promised by Mr. Chamberlain, had not been sent to Pretoria.

In their absence, however, news of the mobilization order reached the Transvaal, and the Boer government immediately issued an ultimatum, which was received at the Colonial Office early on the morning of Tuesday, the tenth of October. In this document four demands were made:—

1. That the British Government should agree to arbitration on terms.
2. That the British troops should be withdrawn from the frontiers of the republic.
3. That all reinforcements landed in South Africa since the first of June should be withdrawn, and that an assurance that no attack was intended should be given.
4. That no more troops should be landed at any port in South Africa. It was further intimated that if no reply had been received at Pretoria by five o'clock on the evening of the eleventh of October, the government of the republic would, "with great regret, be compelled to regard the action of her Majesty's Government as a formal declaration of war."

The ultimatum raised a storm of indignation through-

out the British Isles. It was declared by public speakers that "war had been forced upon Great Britain;" that, "as the paramount power, it was impossible for her to shirk the issue raised by the ill-inspired dispatch of the Transvaal Government;" and that Britain "had been forced into a war with the Transvaal for righteousness and for the suppression of tyranny to kith and kin." The Secretary of State replied "that the conditions demanded are such as her Majesty's Government deem it impossible to discuss," and at the same time Mr. Cunyngham Greene, the British Agent at Pretoria, was directed to apply for his passports. On the following day it was proclaimed by Sir Alfred Milner that "a state of war exists between her Majesty's Government and the Government of the South African Republic, and also between her Majesty's Government and the Government of the Orange Free State." But though "a state of war" existed, only a comparatively small British force was actually on the spot, and it was impossible that any of the troops mobilized on the ninth of October could reach the Cape before the beginning of November.

CHAPTER XX.

BEGINNING HOSTILITIES.

THE first shot of the war was fired on the western frontier. A train with refugees left Mafeking at noon on Tuesday, the tenth of October, in company with an armoured train, which carried a party of police, commanded by Lieutenant Nesbit. Both trains reached Vryburg in safety; but from that point the refugees' train went on alone, while the armoured train remained at Vryburg, where, on Thursday night, news was received that the line had been destroyed at some unknown point to the northward, and also that the wire to Mafeking had been cut. Lieutenant Nesbit was directed to return immediately to Mafeking, and the armoured train, made up of an armoured carriage occupied by the lieutenant and his men, a truck of ammunition, and another truck carrying two guns and a number of lyddite shells, started on its journey, preceded by a pilot engine.

On reaching Maribogo siding, Nesbit was informed that the Boers held the line at Kraaipan, and the station officials endeavoured to persuade him to stay for the night at Maribogo. But this he refused to do, declaring that he must go on at once to Mafeking, if he could by any possibility reach that place. He con-

sented, however, to take precautions; and Mr. Flowerday, the driver of the pilot engine, was directed to go slowly a few yards ahead of the armoured train.

Shortly after starting, Mr. Flowerday found that the two front wheels of his engine were off the rails; and after signalling to the train to stop, he jumped down to ascertain the cause of the mishap. Two rails had been pulled up; but as they were lying by the side of the line, and no Boers were in sight, he thought that the damage could be easily repaired. Scouts were posted on a neighbouring hill, all hands turned out to mend the line, and jacks were placed under the engine with the view of restoring it to its proper position on the rails.

The line to the south was open, and at that time retreat would not have been difficult; but Lieutenant Nesbit was still determined to go on, and work continued for about half an hour. Then the Boers suddenly opened fire. The lieutenant and several men were hit, and as a bullet struck the engine of the armoured train and made a hole in its boiler, retreat and advance became equally impossible. There was no choice but to fight, and the whole party retreated into the armoured carriage, which the Boers steadily peppered throughout the night. The armour, however, was impervious to rifle bullets, and though the light on the engine enabled the riflemen to aim with accuracy, little damage was done.

In the morning the Boers, finding that rifles were not equal to the occasion, brought some artillery into action, and directed their fire at the two engines, taking care not to injure the armoured carriage and the ammunition truck. No part of the train was con-

structed to withstand big guns, and knowing this, Lieutenant Nesbit hoisted the white flag; but though the Boers fired only six or seven shells altogether, about a quarter of an hour passed before any notice was taken of the signal of surrender. Then the fire ceased, and Mr. Flowerday, who had managed to drop unseen out of the train and hide himself in the sluic beside the line, made his way back to Maribogo with the news that the train and its crew had fallen into the hands of the enemy.

Mafeking was thus cut off from all intercourse with the south; but as it was strongly fortified and well supplied with stores of every description, the garrison, which was commanded by Colonel Baden-Powell, and consisted of detachments of the Cape Mounted Police, the Diamond Fields Horse Artillery, and Colonel Hore's Protectorate Regiment, was in a position to make a good fight.

Affairs at Kimberley, where part of the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment was stationed, were in a similar condition. Fourteen Streams, a police station a few miles to the northward, was evacuated on the sixteenth of October, and on the same day telegraphic communication with Vryburg and with the Modder River was cut off. But Mr. Cecil Rhodes, who was in Kimberley, declared that he felt as safe as if he were in Piccadilly. His cheeriness was infectious, and a dispatch rider who left the town after the wires were cut brought word that the inhabitants were confident that they could hold out for some time.

At Vryburg, where there was a large Dutch population, matters ran less smoothly. The inhabitants had no mind for war; they insisted that the Cape Police

should leave the town, and popular opinion on the matter was so decided that Major Scott, the officer in command, was compelled to submit. He left Vryburg with his men on the fifteenth of October; but what he considered a dereliction of duty weighed so heavily on his mind that at the first halt he shot himself dead. The British inhabitants of Vryburg, finding themselves without any adequate means of defence, then retreated to Kuruman; and on the eighteenth of October three Boer commandos entered the town, hoisted the Vierkleur, or four-colour flag of the Transvaal, and issued a proclamation declaring that Bechuanaland was annexed to the South African Republic.

Meanwhile, Aliwal North, Colesberg, and other places in the north of Cape Colony, were also threatened with attack. The Boers, however, concentrated most of their energy on the tongue of land between the Buffalo River and the Drakenberg; and on the thirteenth of October, Natal was invaded by three columns, which advanced simultaneously by way of Botha's Pass, Laing's Nek, and Mott's Nek. Laing's Nek was strongly fortified, all the principal passes leading to the Free State and the Transvaal were occupied, and at various commanding points big guns were posted. Laagers were also formed at sundry strategical positions near Volksrust, and numerous banners were displayed, among them the green flag of Ireland, which floated side by side with the Vierkleur of the Transvaal and the standard of the Orange Free State. A complete brigade of Irish malcontents was in laager at Volksrust, and the Boer forces also included a number of other British subjects, most of whom were

there under compulsion, having been commandeered for service by the field-cornets of the districts in which they resided.

Sir George White, who had gone up from Maritzburg to Ladysmith, had also pushed forward his preparations, and the troops were held ready to act at a moment's notice. It was no part of Sir George's scheme to endeavour to prevent an invasion of Natal; indeed, until the arrival of the Natal Field Force, he could only watch the movements of the enemy, and do his best to check a too determined advance into the colony. So far, the Boers had shown no disposition to march rapidly southward; but as the whole country north of Glencoe lay open to them, the British inhabitants of Newcastle, Glencoe, and other towns on the coal field began to migrate to more secure quarters, and all the railway and government officials were withdrawn. The Boers, consequently, had everything their own way; the Vierkleur was hoisted without opposition at Newcastle and Charlestown, and a strong camp was formed in an important position at Ingagane.

Meanwhile, more Boers continued to pour into Natal by various passes and drifts. General Kock took command at Ingagane, and General Joubert with the main column advanced from Newcastle to Dannhauser, and thence moved south towards Dundee.

CHAPTER XXI.

FIGHTING AT DUNDEE.

DURING Wednesday, the eighteenth of October, the Boers steadily advanced from the north-east towards Glencoe, and it became apparent that they contemplated attacking the Craigside camp. Their patrols, which worked in advance of the main columns, made several attempts to entice the British into the mazes of the hills; while, on the other hand, the British did their best to tempt the Boers into open country. Each party, however, saw through the blandishments of the other, and though shots were exchanged by patrols, the Boers seemed more disposed to avoid a general engagement than to court one. By this time the British exodus had extended to Dundee, and though, at General Symons's request, the majority of the able-bodied men remained to take part in the defence, most of the other inhabitants left the town.

The night of the eighteenth of October passed quietly; but on the nineteenth the Boers still continued to advance. It appeared that their intention was to fall upon the camp on three sides at once, for while General Erasmus with one column was coming southward from Hattingspruit, Commandant Lucas Meyer with a considerably stronger force

was advancing westward from Vryheid, and General Viljoen with a body of Free Staters was on his way up from Waschbank. All these columns were converging on Glencoe, for General Joubert's intention was to use the Hattingspruit column as a bait to lure the British out of their camp, and keep them busy while the other columns attacked them in the rear. Lack of telegraphic communication, however, frustrated his plans; the columns failed to keep in touch, and Commandant Meyer arrived on the scene long before either of the others.

During the night of the nineteenth of October, an attack on the camp was hourly expected. About 2 a.m. a man was shot at one of the outposts, and shortly afterwards some of the eastern pickets were compelled to come in; but on the whole the time passed quietly, though the first streak of dawn revealed a strong force of Boers massed in the neighbourhood. Talana Hill, a rocky, and, on the British side, almost inaccessible summit, about two miles from Dundee, was also occupied, as well as a smaller kopje connected with Talana by a lower ridge, known as Smith's Nek.

As the light increased guns were seen on the hills, and while the horses were being led to water, a puff of smoke and a report heralded the first shell. It whistled over the camp and fell on the open ground beyond it; but a minute or two later, a second and better aimed shell dropped among the guns of the 69th Field Battery. Having found the range, the Boers lost no time in getting to work, and within five minutes shells were falling thickly into the camp, where the most perfect discipline was maintained. Death seemed to be in the air; but as shell after shell

fell and yet not one exploded, it was seen that the Boers were using plugged shells, instead of shells charged in the usual way.

As soon as firing began the horses were brought back to camp; but before they arrived the batteries were trained on Talana Hill with such effective aim that the first shell injured one of the enemy's gunners. Other shells equally well directed followed in rapid succession, and the crash and roar of heavy artillery mingled with the screaming of shells and the whiz of bullets in a hideous din, which rolled in growling echoes through the hills. Shell after shell burst on the hill-top, and then, after an order from General Symons, the 13th and 69th Batteries limbered up, and leaving the 67th Battery to guard the camp and the Newcastle road, galloped off, escorted by half a company of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, the Hussars, and Mounted Infantry, to a new position south-east of Dundee. There they again opened fire, and covered the advance of Brigadier-General Yule, who, with the Dublin Fusiliers, the King's Royal Rifles, and the remainder of the Irish Fusiliers, had been directed to advance upon Talana.

The summit was shrouded by a dense mist, which rendered the defenders almost invisible. The slopes, however, were raked by their bullets; officers and men fell fast, and General Symons, who at first seemed to bear a charmed life, received a mortal wound. The gravity of his injury, however, was not at first apparent; he retained his seat in the saddle, and rode back with his staff to the camp. "Tell General Yule," he said to one of the officers, "my accident is but slight, and that I will be out again to-morrow."

After a long and difficult climb, the infantry reached a stone wall, which ran parallel with the crest of the hill about six hundred yards from the summit. This wall had afforded excellent cover to a party of marksmen, who, with the assistance of one or two Maxims, had already done a good deal of damage. After a sharp tussle, however, they were dislodged by the Rifles and Fusiliers, who, in their turn, took shelter under the wall, where they lay until the artillery had silenced the enemy's guns and driven the riflemen from the crest of the hill to a position farther back on the summit.

At last the critical moment arrived. The British artillery ceased firing, and while the gunners limbered up and galloped off with the guns to a new position west of Talana, the Fusiliers and Rifles fired a couple of volleys, and then with a ringing cheer furiously charged up the last few yards of the hill. A withering storm of bullets mowed them down, but it failed altogether to stop them, and as they appeared on the crest some of the Boers wavered and began to give way. The majority, however, stood their ground, and for a few minutes waged a desperate close-quarters fight. Then some one raised a white flag; the British ceased firing, and the defeated Boers fled down the slope to meet a new enemy in the shape of the Hussars, who had worked round the foot of the hill. As the fugitives made off the cavalry followed, and engaged them in a hand-to-hand fight, during which many prisoners were taken. A complete victory had been gained, but it was dearly bought, for besides General Symons, nearly three hundred officers and men were killed and wounded, and a number of others were reported missing, while

the Boer loss was estimated at about five hundred men.

Rain fell heavily during a great part of the day, and the downpour continued throughout the night. It did not, however, suffice to keep the Boers quiet, and a strong column, led by General Joubert, closed in upon Dundee, and occupied Impati Hill, which commanded the Craigsides camp. The presence of the enemy was made manifest about 1 a.m. on the twenty-first, when the sound of heavy firing was heard; but no damage was done, and after a short time quietness again reigned. The lull, however, was only temporary. At four o'clock the boom of cannon was again heard, and half an hour later a shell dropped in the British camp. Others followed it, and a steady bombardment took place, some shells falling near the hospital, and others in the village, while a few went altogether wide. It was clear that the Boers had got the range fairly correctly, and General Yule, on whom the command had devolved, moved the camp to a better position a little to the southward, and sent the wounded into Dundee, as the field hospital was unsafe.

About this time a violent thunderstorm drove the Boers from their guns, but later in the day the bombardment was resumed, and owing to the elevation and a thick mist which shrouded the hill the fire could not be returned. Another move consequently became imperative, and early on Sunday morning the troops once more shifted their position. Thanks to a dense mist which effectually concealed them, they were allowed to pass a quiet day; but the conviction that Dundee and Glencoe were no longer tenable forced itself on General Yule, and in the evening he issued

orders for a retirement on Ladysmith. It was not possible, however, to move the wounded, and of necessity they remained at Dundee, where they were treated with every kindness by the Boers, who entered the town a few hours after the evacuation.

But neither kindness nor medical skill could save General Symons; his life was fast ebbing, and though at one time there was a shadowy hope that he might, after all, recover, he died on the afternoon of the twenty-third of October.

CHAPTER XXII.

ELANDSLAAGTE.

WHILE the Boer force under General Joubert was closing in upon Dundee, another commando, led by General Kock, was advancing southward towards Ladysmith, and on the nineteenth of October the railway line was destroyed at Elandslaagte, a few miles north of Ladysmith. News of the mishap was telegraphed to General White from Modderspruit station, and early on the twentieth Major-General French, who had just arrived at the camp, was ordered to make a cavalry reconnaissance in the direction of Elandslaagte.

The station was found to be strongly occupied, and after firing a few rounds the cavalry fell back on the main body. Nothing could be done that day, and General French retired to Ladysmith.

An attack in force was immediately planned, and at half-past three the next morning, the twenty-first of October, General French, with five squadrons of the Imperial Light Horse, under Colonel Scott Chisholm, and a battery of the Natal Field Artillery, again rode out of Ladysmith, while half an hour later a detachment of the Manchester Regiment steamed off in an armoured train to open railway communication with

Elandslaagte. While the Manchesters were thus engaged, the Light Horse and the battery advanced beyond the line, and having taken possession of a ridge commanding Elandslaagte station, opened shell fire with guns sighted to nineteen hundred yards. The range was so accurate that the first shell fell among the station buildings and close to the Boer ambulance, which, unfortunately, had been placed near the front, where no ambulance had any business to be. Two or three more shells were fired with equally good aim, and as the station and the surrounding houses were occupied by the enemy, in a few minutes Boers were seen pouring out of the buildings.

Before the Natal seven-pounders had fired many shots the enemy's battery opened fire from a longer range at the back of the station. One shell fell among the Light Horse, a second crashed down close to the battery, and then shell after shell dropped within a radius of about fifty yards. But the men, most of whom were under shell fire for the first time, merely laughed as the missiles screeched past them, and spreading out in open skirmishing order they took possession of the station, which by this time had been vacated by the Boers. The ambulance staff was captured, and the British prisoners taken on the nineteenth were set at liberty.

Then the men, having filled their flasks, fed their horses and refreshed themselves with food and drink from the stores which littered the platforms and buildings. But the Boers had merely retired into the neighbouring kopjes, and when the British occupied the station they turned their guns upon it and shelled the volunteers with a disagreeably accurate aim. The

Natal seven-pounders replied gallantly; but though the gunners aimed straight, good shooting could not make up for the comparatively short range of their guns. Shot after shot fell short, and it was seen that there was no possibility of silencing the opposing artillery. General French therefore decided to retire to Modderspruit to await the arrival of a reinforcement for which he had telephoned to Ladysmith.

At 11.30 troops began to arrive, and about half-past one, as General French considered his force strong enough to begin offensive operations, two batteries, escorted by a squadron of Light Horse and a troop of Natal Mounted Rifles, were ordered to advance to a position on the farther side of the railway. Some of the 5th Lancers crossed the line and skirmished round the lowest spurs of a hill known as Matowan's Hoek; others investigated the kopjes on the road to Besters; and the remainder advanced to the position held by the artillery in the attack on the station. Four troops of the Light Horse rode off to a ridge of kopjes on the east of the line, and the Dragoons took up a position on the left flank of the infantry, who were moving towards the ridge where the Lancers were at work. About this time General White arrived on the field with his staff. He refused, however, to take command, and remarking to General French, "Go on; this is your show," he remained on the field as a spectator of the fight.

Scarcely had the volunteers on the west of the line driven the Boers from the first kopje, when the roll of big guns was heard from the neighbourhood of the station, and as the Lancers advanced a storm of shells came up with a whir that increased to a screech and

ended in a crash. Thus challenged, the British guns also spoke out. Then came the crack of rifle fire, and the cavalry dashed on.

During the early part of the afternoon the sun shone brightly, but later in the day heavy clouds darkened the sky, and rain began to fall in sheets, which blotted out the hills and hid Boers from British and British from Boers. But there was no pause in the battle. Still the troops dashed on; still the Boers maintained their defence; still the English artillery pounded them, and again and again silenced their guns.

Still on! One ridge was passed; another lay ahead, and the fire was fast and furious. In spite of shelter men fell by scores, and the officers, whose duty in directing the advance prevented them from taking cover, suffered, in proportion to their numbers, even more heavily than the men. But there was no pause, no hesitation; and at last, as the crowning ridge was reached, a final rush began, the Devons leading, and the Manchesters, Gordons, and volunteers charging forward in one surging mass of furious humanity. "I remember Majuba," said a Gordon, as he bayoneted a Boer; "you'll remember Elandslaagte." At one point a barbed-wire fence checked the advance. The men could neither climb it nor get through it, and having no wire-cutters, were forced to stop and pull up the posts. The momentary delay gave the Boers a chance. A shower of bullets rattled down, and before the way was clear, several gallant fellows, including Colonel Scott Chisholm, had fallen.

The ridge was nearly won, when, just as the Gordons were sweeping over it, a Boer bugler sounded the "retire." Supposing that the order came from their

own leaders, the Gordons were slowly beginning to fall back, when the bugler of the regiment saw through the trick, and rushing to the front, loudly sounded the "charge." Again the kilted lines dashed forward, and at last the Boers faltered. Cold steel was too much for them, and they rushed down the slope in wild disorder.

Darkness had fallen, but the Lancers charged after them, riding through them, spearing one after another, and driving them farther and farther from the field.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FIGHTING ROUND LADYSMITH.

THE reverse suffered by the Boers at Elandslaagte only temporarily repelled them, and on Monday, the twenty-third of October, a Free State commando came up from Besters and took possession of the line between Ladysmith and Elandslaagte. On that day a train was sent out to fetch in the body of Colonel Scott Chisholm; but about seven miles out it was stopped by the Boers, who burned a bridge in front of it. The search-party, however, was allowed to proceed on foot to the battlefield, and the body was brought in on the following day.

In the meantime information reached Sir George White that General Yule was retiring on Ladysmith by way of Helpmakaar, and with the view of diverting the attention of the Boers from the retreating column, Sir George determined to attack them. This he was well able to do, for strong reinforcements of artillery and infantry had that day come up from Maritzburg.

Early on the morning of Tuesday, the twenty-fourth of October, a column led by General White himself, and composed of the 19th Hussars, the 5th Lancers, the Devons, Gloucesters, Liverpools, and Royal Rifles,

supported by the Natal Volunteers and the Imperial Light Horse, the 10th Mountain Battery and the 42nd and 53rd Field Batteries, filed through the streets of Ladysmith, and emerged on the road taken on the previous Saturday. At first the way was clear, but at Reitfontein—a wide, open valley near Modderspruit station—the leading battalions of cavalry came in sight of the enemy, who occupied Matowan's Hoek and a slightly lower hill known as Tinta Inyoni.

The 19th Hussars came first under fire; then one or two shells fell harmlessly into an advanced party of the Carbineers, and about a quarter to nine a shell fired from the top of the Matowan Kop smashed down into the 42nd Battery, but again little damage was done. Then the British guns thundered forth their answer to the challenge, and the infantry advanced rapidly on the ridge occupied by the Boers, the Gloucesters and Devons leading, with the Liverpools and Lancers on the right, and the Rifles and Natal Volunteers on the left. As the troops moved forward, the guns also changed their position, and having silenced the enemy's artillery, planted shells wherever a group of Boers was to be seen.

The position, however, was immensely strong. It was no easy task to dislodge the Boers, but step by step they were driven back. By 2 p.m. Matowan's Hoek was cleared, and though firing still went on intermittently from Tinta Inyoni, the fight was practically at an end, for the Boers were retreating all along the line; and General White, having accomplished his purpose, withdrew from the field.

The column from Dundee came in on the twenty-seventh of October. But General Joubert was gradually

drawing in his lines, and during Saturday, the twenty-eighth of October, the Boers were busy planting guns on Tinta Inyoni, Signal Hill, Pepworth's Hill, and other kopjes in the neighbourhood of Ladysmith. Commandant Lucas Meyer was posted on the east of the town, General Joubert was somewhere near Modderspruit, and a Free State commando lay near Walker's Hoek, a hill on the north-west of the town.

General White consequently determined to make a reconnaissance in force, in the hope that he might be able to deliver a crushing blow, which would force the Boers to retire. His plan was to tackle all three commandos in such a manner that it would be impossible for the Boers to concentrate their forces at any one spot; and on Sunday evening Lieutenant-Colonel Carleton, with six companies of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, four and a half companies of the Gloucesters, No. 10 Mountain Battery, and the usual paraphernalia of supplies, was ordered to advance up Bell Spruit, occupy Nicholson's Nek, and keep the Free Staters employed. A few hours later General White, with a strong force, moved off to engage the commandos on the east of the town, and before daybreak the guns had taken up the positions assigned to them.

When day dawned, the Boers, having discovered that General White had stolen a march upon them, fired a few shells into Ladysmith. The British guns were quick to reply, and for a couple of hours the sullen boom of big guns, the crackling reports of the Maxims, the rattle of rifle fire, the whistle of bullets, and the screaming of shells filled the air. At first the Boers, firing from high ground, had the advantage, and many of the British shells fell short; but as General White's

gunners found the range a blizzard of shrapnel swept over the ridges, and more than once forced the Boers to seek cover. But again and again they returned to their guns, and even when the fire was hottest the gallant fellows ran out in twos and threes, loaded and laid the guns, fired, and dashed back to avoid the murderous leaden hail which invariably greeted their appearance. One of their officers showed the greatest pluck, for regardless of the British fire he stood, field-glass in hand, on a wall, from which he directed his men until a shell reached him, and he fell to rise no more.

At last there was a partial lull, but it was of short duration, and long before ten o'clock shells from the Boer guns were again falling into the British ranks, while General White's artillery briskly kept up the ball.

At last it became clear to Sir George White that the position was absolutely untenable, and the men were ordered to retire. The batteries, with the Natal Volunteers and part of the Manchesters and Gordons, did their best to cover the retreat; and about this time the Naval Brigade from H.M.S. *Tartar* and *Powerful* arrived with a battery of quick-firing guns. Sir George White, who was conducting the retirement, did not, however, consider it desirable to renew the fighting. The Boers, too, had apparently had enough, for they withdrew from Signal Hill, and the rest of the day passed quietly.

Fate, meanwhile, had dealt hardly with Colonel Carleton and his men. They marched unmolested to within two miles of Nicholson's Nek, but then some boulders rolled down the hill and crashed in among the ammunition mules, while at the same time a few rifle shots were fired. The sudden commotion frightened

the animals ; the panic spread from one to another, and before the men could stop them they stampeded with the gun equipment and most of the reserve ammunition. Possibly it would have been wiser to retire, but Colonel Carleton was unwilling to do so, and about 1 a.m. he took a position on a hill about two miles from the nek. At dawn the Boers began to skirmish round the hill, but they made little headway until about 9.30, when a reinforcement came up, and a withering fire compelled two companies, of the Gloucesters to fall back. Fighting continued, however, until two o'clock, when the troops had almost expended their ammunition. The Boers began to close in, and from part of the line a shout of "cease firing" was raised. Then the word went round that a young officer who held an isolated position, and believed that he and a few men with him were the only survivors of the column, had raised the white flag. In reality, about 900 men were alive ; but as the white flag had been raised, Colonel Carleton felt bound to surrender, and the whole column, with the exception of about a hundred men who managed to escape, was sent to Pretoria.

This success inspired the Boers to new endeavours. Early on the thirty-first of October a few shells were thrown into Ladysmith, but firing soon ceased, and an armistice was arranged, in order that the wounded might be brought in and the dead buried. The principal event at this time, however, was the annexation by the Boers of the whole of northern Natal. Ladysmith was completely isolated on the second of November, and on the same day the enemy appeared in such force at Colenso that the troops stationed in the village were compelled to fall back on Estcourt.



CAPE TOWN

CHAPTER XXIV.

FROM ORANGE RIVER TO MAGERSFONTEIN.

THE opening days of November were signalized by the arrival at Cape Town of a larger number of British officers than were ever before employed simultaneously in South Africa. Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., G.C.B., K.C.M.G., arrived with his staff on the thirty-first of October; ten days later the Union liner *Moor* came in with a second party, which included Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen, K.C.V.O., Major-General Sir C. F. Clery, K.C.B., and Major-General Sir W. T. Gatacre, K.C.B., D.S.O., and without loss of time the generals proceeded to take up their various commands. Sir C. F. Clery departed to Natal; Sir W. T. Gatacre joined his division at Queenstown; Lieutenant-General French, who had left Ladysmith by the last southward-bound train, assumed command of a cavalry brigade at Hanover Road; and Lord Methuen hastened off to Orange River, where a force intended for the relief of Kimberley had already begun to concentrate. He did not, however, arrive until after the first skirmish had taken place, for on the eleventh of November a reconnoitring party came in contact with the Boers near Kafir's Kop, a range of hills about ten miles east of Belmont station.

Lord Methuen and his staff reached Orange River on the twelfth of November, and a day or two later Major-General Wauchope, in command of the Highland Brigade, paid a flying visit to the camp. Troops came up in rapid succession, and on Tuesday, the twenty-first of November, the entire division crossed the Orange River. The Boers, however, still occupied Kafir's Kop. It was imperative that they should be dislodged, and on Wednesday afternoon the troops advanced to within striking distance of the enemy. Two or three hours after midnight regiment after regiment silently left the bivouac, crept stealthily across the moonlit veldt, and in unbroken silence slowly wound along the base of the ridge.

Then came the moment when the sun rose above the hilltops, and for the first time revealed to the Boers that Lord Methuen had stolen a march upon them. A thousand rifles cracked, a line of fire sparkled along the hills, and a storm of lead rattled into the advancing column, which was marching in such close formation that the bullets could scarcely fail to hit. But for once even the finest marksmen found it difficult to pick off the officers, for, in obedience to an order from Lord Methuen, they had dispensed with all distinguishing marks, and had gone into action with weapons and accoutrements similar to those used by the privates.

On the other hand, it was no easy matter to return the fire effectively, for the light was in the men's eyes; and, moreover, aim was a matter of guess-work, for though the kopje was crowded with Boers, every man lay snugly in shelter.

But now, covered by a brisk artillery fire, the infantry began to scale the hills. The Boers, standing firm and

grim, poured volley after volley into the ranks. The hottest corner of all was that occupied by the Grenadiers, who suffered terribly. In a few minutes more than a hundred men had been hit; but still the regiment worked upwards, until near the crest came a moment's halt. Then the order, "Forward, men," rang out, and with bayonets fixed the Guards swept over the summit, while the Boers rushed from their stations and tore headlong down the farther slope.

The capture of the first position did not end the fight, for retreating to a second line of hills, the Boers again stood at bay. But with dogged pluck the regiments streamed on like a resistless wave; and again, after sweeping the ranks with a deadly fire which for a moment checked the advance, the Boers retired to their third position on a strongly-entrenched kopje. Once more the infantry advanced upon them through a stinging, murderous storm of lead; and while the Naval Brigade judiciously dropped shell after shell into the "schanzes," the Lancers and Mounted Infantry were moved forward. The Boers stood their ground pluckily, but the shells fell faster and faster, the position became too hot to hold them, and rushing from their trenches, they spread themselves over the veldt. The victory was complete. Not only were the Boers driven from their entrenchments, but in the pursuit their laager was captured, and its contents, which included several guns and a quantity of ammunition, were destroyed.

On the twenty-fourth of November Lord Methuen, with the greater part of his force, advanced to Swinkspan, with the view of attacking the Boers, who were reported to be entrenched in some kopjes near Enslin.

Long before dawn on the following morning the troops cautiously made their way through the bush-clad country, where it soon became clear that the Boers were on the alert, for about half-past four an irregular corps, known as Remington's Guides, suddenly came under a sharp fire. Owing perhaps to the darkness no damage was done, and the men kept on their way until, as they neared the kopjes, two big guns sent a torrent of shells into the ranks.

The whole force was soon engaged, and for two or three hours little could be heard except the booming of heavy guns and the screaming of shells. Apparently the Boers had already carefully measured the distances, for they had the exact range, and a hail of shrapnel fell into the British batteries. But the men stuck gallantly to their guns, answering shot for shot, though after a while the position became so uncomfortably warm that the guns were moved a thousand yards to the rear.

Owing to the numerous boulders which studded the kopjes the Boers' cover was so good that artillery alone had no chance of making a complete clearance, and the infantry was ordered forward in the teeth of a merciless storm of bullets. Firing as they advanced, the men steadily pressed onward, and after a few minutes' work with the bayonet succeeded in driving the Boers from their first position. As they retreated to a neighbouring kopje the Lancers dashed after them; but just as they came up with the rear of the retreating foe a heavy fire from the second kopje, which also was strongly manned, compelled them to give up the pursuit.

One kopje had been taken, but now from almost every hill in the neighbourhood came the rattle of

rifle fire. Again the order to advance sounded above the tumult, and once more the Boers were forced from their position, and compelled to retire to a more distant kopje. This in turn was found to be untenable, and recognizing that the day was hopelessly lost, the discomfited burghers streamed in hot haste across the veldt. Only a cavalry charge was needed to complete the rout; but the Lancers' horses were dead beat, and Lord Methuen was forced to content himself with vigorously shelling the fugitives.

From Enslin Lord Methuen advanced to Modder River, where, on the twenty-ninth of November, he again encountered the Boers. As the mounted infantry neared the stream a carefully-concealed gun opened fire upon them. The spot whence the shot proceeded was marked by a mud hut, and with this for a guide the 18th Battery attempted to silence the unseen gun. Other guns from the farther side of the river then began to speak, and the thunder of guns, the scream of shells, the whistle of bullets, and the noisy gurgle of the Maxim-Nordenfelt quick-firers transformed the stillness of the summer morning into the deafening tumult of deadly war.

While the Boers were perfectly concealed, the British on the open veldt were almost entirely without shelter. But the flash of the guns marked the position of the trenches, and the artillery kept up a ceaseless thunder while Lord Methuen's infantry crept slowly forward.

The 1st Battalion of Scots Guards worked forward on the extreme right, with the view of taking the Boers in flank, and the Grenadiers and the 2nd Battalion of the Coldstreams engaged his front. The 1st Bat-

talion Coldstreams in the meantime was held in reserve in the rear. The 9th Infantry Brigade, under General Pole-Carew, with the Highlanders, advanced on both sides of the railway line, moving diagonally in the direction of the demolished bridge, while far to the left half a battalion of the North Lancashires endeavoured to fall upon the Boers' right flank. In view of the heavy fire the men were formed in open skirmishing order. The force consequently was spread over a large extent of ground, and though the Guards were in full view of the enemy, the 9th Brigade was at first sheltered by a ridge which intervened between the line of advance and the river.

Consequently, the attention of the Boers was at first centred on the Guards, and men went down like nine-pins before the blasting fire, which in a few minutes wiped out the Scots Maxim detachment, and made it necessary to abandon the gun. A group of buildings afforded a temporary shelter to the Scots, and for some moments the Grenadiers got into cover behind slightly higher ground. Then the leaden hail again burst upon them, and as the Riet, a tributary of the Modder, proved to be unfordable, further advance became impossible.

Though the difficulties of crossing the river appeared to be insuperable, no one dreamed of retiring; and lying down on the veldt, the British poured volley after volley into the Boer lines. Every man had taken into action with him at least a hundred and fifty rounds; and as again and again fresh supplies were brought forward, the fire never slackened, and no rifle became silent until its owner was either slain or disabled. And still the artillery boomed; still the pitiless sun

beat down on the thirst-maddened combatants; still the murderous fire tore up the ground, and bullets flew with so deadly an aim that if a man did but stir he was almost certain to be hit. Even the wounded dared not move; the stretcher parties found it impossible to bring them in, and not so much as a drink of water could be taken to them except at the risk of the bearer's life. Yet now and then one or another ventured out to help some stricken comrade, and officers and men vied with each other in acts of unselfish, generous heroism.

About 11 a.m. the fire slackened, and during the lull the Coldstreams were moved to the left to support the 9th Brigade, which also was heavily engaged. Far to the left the Boers held a strong position on the south bank of the river, and as the Lancers approached a withering fire burst upon them from a group of kopjes and rocks. A neighbouring farm added its quota to the storm of bullets, and the troops were compelled to halt while the artillery was brought to bear on the buildings, which speedily assumed a dilapidated aspect. Several of the defenders were killed, and the fire so far slackened that early in the afternoon Lieutenant-Colonel Barter, with a couple of companies of the Yorkshires and some Northumberlands and Highlanders, made a vigorous rush on the partially-demolished farm.

As the Highlanders stormed the building some one inside it raised a white flag; but the sign of truce having been often violated it gained no respect, and after a short, sharp struggle the house was taken, and every Boer in it was slain. Almost at the same moment the Lancashires rushed the kopjes on the left,

and cleared the way to the river. The stream could only be crossed by swimming; and making a sudden rush, Lieutenant Thorpe, with a few Highlanders, reached the farther bank. General Pole-Carew, with more men, followed close on the heels of the first party; and the little band dashed forward so vigorously that a second detachment mistook it for a portion of the Boer force, until a hearty British cheer established the identity of the general and his men.

The cheer and the ringing "hurrah" which answered it thoroughly alarmed the Boers. More than once such a shout had ushered in the rout and slaughter of their forces; and expecting the cheers to be followed by a bayonet charge, some of them began to waver. But still the guns thundered. Lieutenant-Colonel Northcott was mortally injured; and Lord Methuen, having been hit in the thigh, found it necessary to hand over the command to Major-General Sir H. Colville. The change of general, however, interfered in no way with the vigour of the attack; and notwithstanding the artillery fire, General Pole-Carew's men continued to advance, and took possession of Modder River village. News that they had crossed the stream failed, however, to reach the main body; and the gunners, observing increased activity on the Boer right, continued to shell the village. A messenger hurried off to explain matters; but meanwhile the deadly accuracy of the fire compelled the party to halt, and the flank attack was thus brought to an untimely end.

Misfortune also dogged the 75th Battery, which, with the 18th Battery, had galloped up to within twelve hundred yards of the village, and thence poured a murderous fire into the enemy's trenches. An equally

destructive fire was returned ; and when three officers and eleven men belonging to the battery had been hit, and only five rounds of ammunition remained, the horses were brought up to take the guns out of action. Their appearance was the signal for a renewed outburst of firing. Twenty-five horses were shot down, and for a few moments the attempt to withdraw the guns looked like certain death for man and beast. Then the officers gave up their chargers ; men, wounded and unwounded, lent a hand to limber up the guns and harness the horses ; a driver, shot through the lungs, still stuck to his post ; and, somehow, the guns were taken out of action.

By this time the 62nd Battery had come up from Belmont, escorted by a detachment of the Munster Fusiliers. The new arrivals were able to give very material assistance ; and, thanks partly to their energetic aid, the tide of battle, which already was setting towards the British, took a decided turn in their favour. As dusk approached the firing eased off ; the Boer artillery became silent ; and though the positions of the two armies were unchanged, and a desultory rifle fire still continued, the battle was practically at an end.

Lord Methuen had intended to make a night attack, and clear the trenches at the point of the bayonet, but this plan had to be abandoned. Many of his men had gone breakfastless into battle, and the long fight without food or water in the scorching sun had completely exhausted them. They were utterly unfit for further exertion, and the whole force bivouacked for the night on the field.

For several days after the battle Lord Methuen remained in camp at Modder River, while the engineers

repaired the bridge. The difficulty of the task was enhanced by the flooded state of the river; but when the removal of a dam half a mile or so downstream lowered the water a couple of feet, operations were greatly facilitated. Work went on apace, and on the seventh of December regular communication with the south was reopened. Every one was in the best of health and spirits; and as Kimberley was only twenty-four miles distant, it was confidently expected that the relief of the town would shortly become an accomplished fact.

The Boers, however, still occupied the surrounding country; and they now entrenched themselves on a ridge known as Magersfontein, a few miles to the east of Spytfontein. A detached group of kopjes and low hills formed a sort of outpost on the west of the ridge, and long lines of shelter trenches ran up the valleys to the rear, while a big gun guarded the eastern flank. The front of the main position was further strengthened by sundry walls which crossed the upper part of the slope, and provided for a double line of fire.

On the ninth of December a big naval gun, nicknamed Joe Chamberlain, opened fire on the trenches, with the view of discovering the exact whereabouts of the guns. The fire was promptly returned; and when the Boer artillery was thus unmasked, the British howitzers came to the assistance of Joe Chamberlain, and together they poured in lyddite and ordinary shell, until one after another the enemy's guns were silenced. Even from a distance the destructive effects of the new explosive were apparent: every shell that burst churned up the ground into fine reddish-brown dust; and as Joe could easily throw his missiles to a distance of

eight thousand yards or more, great things were expected from him.

Lord Methuen's force had been augmented by the arrival of several additional batteries of artillery, as well as by General Wauchope's Highland Brigade, which included the Argyll and Sutherlands, the Sea-forths, the Black Watch, the Highland Light Infantry, and the Gordons. The men, after their rest, were reported "fit to do anything and go anywhere;" and on Sunday, the tenth of December, the artillery was ordered out to shell the Magersfontein trenches. One lyddite shell lighted in the midst of a prayer meeting, and did great execution; but the Boers could not be provoked into replying, and about seven o'clock the guns and their escort returned to camp, having failed conspicuously in their endeavours to "draw" the enemy.

As evening came on, the drizzling rain, which had been falling throughout the afternoon, increased to a hearty downpour. It was intensely dark—just the night for a surprise attack; and about midnight the Highland Brigade, led by General Wauchope, and supported on the right by the Guards and Yorkshires, moved out of camp, with the view of storming the kopje. That the position was a strong one and well entrenched was already known; but no one had any idea that the Boers had carried their defensive works far out into the bush-covered veldt, and that a long trench crowded with riflemen and defended by a barbed-wire entanglement stretched at least a couple of miles across the plain, and then, turning off at right angles, continued towards the river. Consequently, no special precautions were taken. The men were formed in close order of quarter column, and swung along at a rapid

pace, not for a moment supposing that there was a single Boer nearer than the fighting kopje.

But in the burghers' lines matters were very different: every man was on the alert and watchful. Possibly Sunday's bombardment had aroused suspicion; possibly spies had given warning of the intended attack. At all events, the Boers were ready and waiting.

Suddenly a rifle shot rang out, and from one end of the line a light was flashed on the faces of the Highlanders. From the other end a Boer rifle cracked; and the trench, less than a couple of hundred yards in front of the column, burst into flame, and a tornado of bullets crashed through the ranks. For a moment the Highlanders stood astounded as their best and bravest fell before that awful fire, and then an ungovernable panic seized them. Some one shouted, "Retire," and they rushed off in a headlong, unreasoning stampede. But it was only for a moment. Many of the officers were down; but General Wauchope, though a bullet had knocked off his helmet, was still unhurt. "Steady, men, steady!" he shouted, and sprang forward, to fall the next moment shot to death, while with his last breath he cheered on and encouraged his men, who nobly responded to the call. Quickly recovering themselves, they rallied, and again dashed forward into the barbed-wire entanglement, where, unable to free themselves, they floundered and stumbled, while still the pitiless hailstorm of lead beat them down. Before such a fire no man might stand and live, and what was left of the Highland Brigade was compelled to fall back, leaving the wounded where they had fallen.

After the repulse of the Highland Brigade, four companies of the Gordons, who had been held in reserve,

were ordered forward. With pipes skirling they dashed out in open formation, and cheered on by their colonel, made a rush for the trenches. Their line of advance lay close to a hitherto unseen flanking trench manned by sharpshooters, who lay low until the Gordons had passed. Then another vicious line of fire blazed out; death stalked over the veldt, and scores of men fell.

This time the survivors held their ground unmoved, and throwing themselves on their faces, opened fire on the invisible enemy. Once a few Highlanders of different regiments managed to reach one of the trenches, and with a desperate rush sprang in and captured half a dozen prisoners. But the trench proved utterly untenable, and after a few moments the plucky fellows were driven back to where their comrades, assisted by dismounted men of the 12th Lancers and Mounted Infantry, kept up a withering fire, which did terrible execution among the Boers.

The artillery had by this time come into action, and the gunners made play with deadly accuracy. But even Joe Chamberlain's lyddite shells could not provoke General Cronje to let his guns reveal their positions. The Boers were fighting to win; and with consummate skill their leader refused to let a single man leave the shelter of the trenches, where, though hundreds must have fallen, hundreds more took the vacant places, and kept up the hail of lead, under which the peaceful veldt had come to be a veritable Aceldama.

Meanwhile, on the extreme right the Guards and Yorkshires gained a slight advantage. But pluck in the open could not make headway against pluck in shelter; and at sundown Lord Methuen found it necessary to retire. The Boers, their heavy losses notwith-

standing, still held their position ; and as the withdrawal began their guns for the first time made themselves heard. The British artillery, however, had the last word ; and during the night the Boers made no attempt to follow up the advantage gained in the day. Morning light, however, showed them still in possession. It was obvious that without a much stronger force Magersfontein was impregnable ; and after a few shells had been exchanged, with no particular result, Lord Methuen reluctantly withdrew to Modder River.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE DEFENCE OF CAPE COLONY.

THE invasion of Cape Colony began on the first of November, when Colesberg Bridge and Norval's Pont were captured. Colesberg was next occupied, and before the end of the month Stormberg, Aliwal North, and a number of other places, had fallen into the hands of the invaders, who almost daily received fresh accessions of strength. Early in December Dordrecht was annexed to the Free State. But by this time General Gatacre was ready to take the field, and on the ninth of December he advanced to Molteno with the view of attacking the Boer position at Stormberg. As the idea was to take the enemy by surprise, a night march was necessary; but the guides lost the way, and when the troops should have been nearing Stormberg they were scrambling wearily along hilly, difficult paths. Finally, after considerable delay, they approached Stormberg, and entered a valley shut in on one side by a kopje, and on the other by a long, precipitous ridge. All unnecessary noise had been avoided, even the gun wheels were muffled, and the men went along cheerily, believing that, notwithstanding the delays, the surprise would be complete.

But already a signal had flashed a warning to the

Stormberg commando, and the Boers, instead of sleeping peacefully, were all on the alert and preparing to defend themselves. Their preparations, too, were assisted by the gray light of dawn, for morning was breaking as the column approached Rooikop.

Above the path the rocky slopes frowned bare and forbidding. But not a Boer was to be seen, and the British were marching along at ease, when suddenly a storm of bullets poured down from the rocks upon them. For a moment the men were staggered by the suddenness of the attack; then, with magnificent courage, they made a dash up the precipitous slope, and—thanks to the rocks which afforded some shelter—the foremost ranks almost reached the lowest line of trenches. Meanwhile, the artillery galloped about looking for positions; but before the guns could get fairly into action, the relentless hail of lead drove back the Fusiliers who led the assault. From front, left, and right a blizzard of fire tore through the ranks; and the men, already worn with long marching, scrambled down the kopje. Racing headlong across the zone of fire, they fell back on the main body; but some were shot as they ran, and others, too dead-beat to care very much what became of them, took refuge in a nullah, where they lay in the shelter of the banks. It was supposed that all had come in; and General Gatacre, seeing that the position was impregnable, ordered a retirement. Those who remained in the nullah were left behind, and thus several hundred prisoners were captured by the Boers.

Meanwhile, the fire from the heights still continued; but the artillery, who covered the retirement, poured in such a well-directed hail of shells that more than once

the Boers were temporarily driven from the crest; and thus assisted, General Gatacre was able to collect the remainder of his men. The Irish Rifles and Northumberland Fusiliers were told off to act as rear guard, and while the two batteries, alternately retiring, kept up a steady fire, the troops slowly worked their way back to Molteno, though before they reached camp many had fallen out of the ranks from sheer exhaustion. Two days later General Gatacre withdrew to Sterkstroom, and nothing of importance occurred until the third of January, when Molteno was occupied by the Boers.

A change in the general command had by this time taken place. General Buller had found it necessary to join the force engaged in Natal, and as more and more troops were poured into South Africa, it was considered desirable that an officer of higher rank should be appointed Commander-in-Chief of the forces in South Africa. The choice fell on Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, V.C., affectionately nicknamed "Bobs," and Major-General Lord Kitchener of Khartoum was appointed Chief of the Staff.

The two officers started immediately—one from England, the other from Khartoum; and having met at Gibraltar, they arrived together at Cape Town on the tenth of January, in company with Major-General Kelly-Kenny, the commander of the newly-mobilized 6th Division. Troops were still pouring into the various ports; and now, as the war-fever gained ground in all parts of the British Empire, and the need of additional strength became daily more apparent, the yeomanry, volunteers, and militia volunteered for service. The offer was accepted. The corps of "Imperial Yeo-

manry" was raised, volunteer battalions were equipped for foreign service, and in the city of London and almost every town and village in the British Isles men began eagerly to prepare for the fray.

With the change in the supreme command a season of fresh activity began. Towards the end of January General Kelly-Kenny, with the 6th Division, occupied Thebus; and a day or two later Brabant's Horse, a newly-formed body of mounted volunteers commanded by Brigadier-General Brabant, arrived at Sterkstroom. A few more days of comparative inaction followed, while further troops and volunteers were moved up to join the force in the north of Cape Colony.

On the seventh of February a sharp action was fought near the British camp on Bird's River. This time victory smiled on the British, and General Brabant followed up the advantage by making a vigorous attack on Dordrecht. The Boers defended themselves gallantly, but having no artillery they fought at a great disadvantage, and after a stubborn resistance were compelled to evacuate the town.

Fortune meanwhile had been kinder to General French; and though, up to Christmas, nothing of importance was done, the year, on the whole, closed prosperously. During the greater part of December his troops were kept busy reconnoitring and skirmishing in the neighbourhood of Arundel, which was occupied on the eighth of December, just in time to prevent the Boers from taking possession of it. It was an ideal spot for a camp, for good water was plentiful, and a group of rugged hills rising from flat ground formed a natural fortress. Consequently, the headquarters of the division moved up from Naauwpoort, and a perma-

ment camp was established at Arundel. The advanced guard of the Boers at that time was entrenched at Rensburg, about half way between Arundel and Colesberg, where the bulk of their force was camped.

Towards the end of the month the constant activity of the British seriously discomposed the Boers. Their line of communication was threatened, and fearing, apparently, that the Rensburg camp might be isolated, on the thirtieth of December they withdrew from their entrenchments and retired to Colesberg. Rensburg was promptly occupied by General French, who followed up the retreating force, and early on January 1, 1900, took up a position on a kopje overlooking Colesberg. As soon as the light permitted, his guns opened fire on the enemy's laager; and though the Boers fought bravely, the persistent hail of shells at length forced them to give way.

The troops continued to hold the positions which they had taken up; but Colesberg was not yet recaptured, and a strong force of Boers continued to guard the approach to the town.

On the sixth of January Colonel Watson, with a detachment of the Suffolk Regiment, attacked a grassy hill which formed part of the Boer position. As a surprise was intended, every precaution was taken to avoid noise. Ordinary boots were discarded, and though the ground was exceedingly rough, men who did not possess canvas shoes merely wore their socks. Frequent halts were made, in order to survey the hillside and discover the exact whereabouts of the column; and thus, cautiously and quietly, the summit of the hill was at last reached.

So far not a Boer had been seen; but in the rear of

the crest a high schanz, crowded with watchful men, commanded the unsuspecting Suffolks. As the officers advanced, with the leading company only a few yards behind them, a terrific line of fire blazed from the schanz, and the colonel, the adjutant, two other officers, and a number of men had fallen before a shot could be fired in reply. One company, however, had drawn off a little to the right, and as the colonel's party was mowed down, Captain Brett and his men charged the enemy. But at that moment some one in the Boer lines shouted "Retire," and most of the Suffolks, supposing that the order came from one of their own officers, turned and ran down the hill under a hail-storm of bullets.

Captain Brett, meanwhile, had found some cover for his men, and seeing that his party was alone, directed a sergeant and five privates to cut their way through the enemy and inform the British artillery of his whereabouts. Three of the six managed to get through and deliver their message. But in the meantime the Boers had completely surrounded Brett's party, and after making a gallant stand for two hours, the captain and seventy-two other officers and men were compelled to surrender.

Several reinforcements joined General French, and by the middle of January he had about ten thousand men under his command. The force was split up into five separate columns, one of which had its camp near Colesberg, with an outpost on Coleskop, where a couple of guns were stationed. An ingeniously-constructed cable lift supplied them with ammunition, and as they commanded the whole neighbourhood they were able to make things unpleasantly hot for any of the Boers

who unadvisedly came within range. The base was still established at Rensburg, and eastward of Colesberg troops were stationed at Slingersfontein, Potfontein, and Meders Camp.

Early in February General French and his cavalry were summoned to take part in a movement from Modder River, and General Clements took command of the troops remaining near Rensburg. The departure of the cavalry was speedily followed by a new outburst of activity on the part of the Boers, and on the twelfth of February the Worcesters' camp at Slingersfontein was vigorously attacked. Shell fire began at sunrise, and as the enemy advanced in overwhelming force, it was clear that a hot time was coming. Out-numbered as the Worcesters were, however, they contrived to hold their own; and when evening approached they were still in possession, though the Boers were not by any means discouraged. During the day they had received large reinforcements, and several outposts north-west of Colesberg were seriously threatened.

Coleskop itself had to be evacuated, and as it was obvious that Slingersfontein and other camps in the neighbourhood of Rensburg, if tenable at all, could only be held at heavy cost, the whole force retired on Arundel, where the headquarters camp was established.

Notwithstanding this rebuff, the tide was now setting in favour of the British; and on Friday, the sixteenth of February, Brabant's Horse, after a stiff fight, which lasted several hours, drove the Boers out of Dordrecht. Four wagons were captured, and the Boer forces took up a strong position on a hill to the northward of the town. The British, in the meantime, occupied a similar position south of the town, and for

some hours shells flew backwards and forwards over Dordrecht as both parties kept up a smart artillery fire. But fortune no longer favoured the Boers. By the seventeenth of February they had been driven from all their positions, and any further invasion of Cape Colony was rendered impossible. This was evidently apparent to the enemy, for a day or two later many of them recrossed the Orange River and retired into the Free State.

Much still remained to be done before Cape Colony could be considered clear of invaders, but all along the line the troops were active, and one small success after another was scored. On the twenty-third of February a force from Arundel ousted the Boers from a strong position at Drooifontein; on the same day General Gatacre made a successful reconnaissance towards Stormberg; and four days later Rensburg was reoccupied by General Clements, who, on the twenty-eighth of February, entered Colesberg without encountering any opposition. Stormberg was successfully reoccupied on the sixth of March, and thus, step by step, the ground lost by the British was recovered.

Then a turn of fortune's wheel gave a momentary advantage to the Boers. In the neighbourhood of Prieska the Cape Dutch declared in their favour, and on the same day that General Gatacre reoccupied Stormberg both Prieska and Kenhardt were proclaimed Free State territory. Elsewhere, however, success continued to attend the British. General Clements took possession of Norval's Pont; and Burghersdorp, having been evacuated by the Boers, was occupied by General Gatacre's Mounted Infantry. During the first fortnight of March many of the Boers and colonial

Dutch laid down their arms, and it was commonly reported that thousands of others intended to surrender to General Brabant, who, on Sunday, the eleventh of March, entered Aliwal North.

Lord Kitchener now came to the assistance of the other generals engaged in Cape Colony. His first act was to retake Prieska, where the Boers immediately laid down their arms. Successive reverses had completely disheartened them. Moreover, the altered aspect of the war demanded their presence in the Free State, and before the middle of April it was announced that "the rebellion in the north-western districts of Cape Colony was at an end."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE SIEGE AND RELIEF OF KIMBERLEY.

KIMBERLEY in the meantime had been closely besieged. A bombardment, which at first was not productive of any particular result, began on the sixteenth of October, and day after day the town was persistently shelled. The inhabitants, however, refused to capitulate—their motto was “no surrender;” and as days became weeks, and weeks grew into months, they still held out with dogged courage. Consequently, on the fourteenth of November, when the Boers proclaimed that Griqualand West was annexed to the Free State, Kimberley and Mafeking, which held their own with equal persistence, were specially excepted.

At Kimberley mining operations were necessarily suspended during the siege, and the versatile engineers in the employment of the De Beers Company turned their attention to the construction of shells, several of which bore the inscription, “With C. J. Rhodes’s compliments.” The missiles, which were used for the first time on the twenty-third of November, when the armoured train reconnoitred the line to Dronfield, proved perfectly satisfactory. They exploded beautifully; and when one of them struck a farmhouse

occupied by a party of Boers, the roof was smashed, and the occupants hastily departed in manifest alarm, lest the destructive "compliments" should be followed by others of a similar nature.

About the third week in November, news that a relief column was on the way somehow filtered into the beleaguered town. The good tidings inspired the garrison with fresh vigour, and on the twenty-fifth of November, Colonel Scott Turner, with the Lancashires, the Cape Police, the Kimberley Light Horse, and a detachment of artillery, attacked the Boer position at Lazaretto Ridge, so named on account of the proximity of the town lazaretto. Starting before dawn the troops surprised the enemy's pickets, most of whom were asleep, and working quietly along the ridge, managed to approach quite close to the camp before they were observed. The Boers then opened fire at short range, and Colonel Scott Turner gave the order to fix bayonets and charge. With a resounding cheer the men sprang forward, scrambled over the redoubts, and before the enemy could offer any effective resistance, were in possession of the camp. Most of the Boers, realizing that further opposition must be fruitless, stopped firing, raced from the captured position, and took refuge in a neighbouring hollow. A certain number, however, held their ground, but were soon compelled to surrender; and more than thirty prisoners, several of them wounded, were taken.

The first position was carried; but beyond it, and about three hundred yards distant, was another large laager, which Colonel Scott Turner decided not to attack. Had his force been provided with a reserve of ammunition, he might have attempted an assault;

cartridges, however, were running short, and the Boers were keeping up a galling fire from the dense bush at the back of the laager. A reinforcement was also seen coming to their assistance; but the movement was frustrated by the artillery, who were ably seconded by a party of Lancashires and Kimberley volunteers.

Meanwhile, Colonel Scott Turner's horse was shot under him, and another bullet struck him in the shoulder. Fortunately, the injury was not serious, and he continued to command while the force, under cover of the artillery fire, skirmished back to camp.

The twenty-ninth of November was an eventful day. The southward movement of the Boers was considered indicative of an intention to oppose Lord Methuen's advance, and partly with the view of keeping them employed, Colonel Kekewich had determined to undertake further offensive measures. Accordingly, Colonel Scott Turner, with a strong force, was directed to attack the Boer position near Carter's Farm, on the south-west of the town. Covered by the artillery fire, the cavalry took possession of the buildings without much difficulty; and then, leaving a detachment in charge, the colonel advanced towards Spitz Kop, where the enemy's guns were making play on the volunteer artillery, who vigorously returned the fire. Two guns which accompanied Colonel Scott Turner made a futile attempt to batter down the redoubts on the hill, and then with a sudden dash the troops sprang forward and carried the laager by assault.

As usual, the Boers contrived to escape, though, owing to the haste with which they decamped, they were unable to save their property. The victors, therefore, took possession of the spoil, which included

a quantity of shells and gunpowder, a wagon and team of oxen, a gun limber, and a variety of stores.

After rushing the laager, the troops proceeded to storm the ridge, and make their victorious way along the crest. The Boers disputed almost every yard of ground; but the bull-dog grip of British troops was not easily shaken off, and three redoubts were carried one after another in rapid succession.

Meanwhile, the burghers who were endeavouring to hold the ridge had received considerable reinforcements. The fourth redoubt, consequently, was well manned and desperately defended; but again Colonel Scott Turner and his men dashed at the defences, regardless of the tornado of bullets that swept through the ranks, cutting fearful gaps where a moment before gallant fellows had stood. One of the first to fall was the colonel himself; another and another were laid low; and in a few deadly moments the ground in front of the redoubt was thickly strewn with dead and wounded men.

Among those less seriously injured was Lieutenant Clifford of the Lancashires, who in spite of his wound, when he saw that the Boers were holding their own, volunteered to lead a bayonet charge. The men were as ready to follow as he was to lead; but the death of Colonel Scott Turner so far upset the plan of attack that Major Pakeman, who succeeded to the command, considered it necessary to withdraw. Darkness covered the retreat, and the force retired on Carter's Farm.

December passed comparatively uneventfully, but trouble was drawing nearer and nearer. Early in January, provisions began to run short; lime juice and green vegetables came to an end, and the diminishing supply of

fresh meat had to be supplemented with horseflesh. The natural consequence of the scarcity was an increase of disease, and, especially among the native population, scurvy spread with alarming rapidity. Typhoid also raged, and in the almost total absence of proper food the death-rate went up by leaps and bounds.

The bombardment was carried on with unabated vigour; day after day dragged its length along without any change, except in the virulence of the fire. As time went on, the outbreaks of firing increased in vigour, and on the eleventh of February such a tornado of shells burst over the town and the women's laager that hundreds of women and children took refuge in the mines, while caves, hollowed in the heaps of refuse, sheltered the men. So thoroughly alarmed were the inhabitants, that all places of business were closed, and for four days and nights many persons dared not show themselves above ground. Other persons, unable or unwilling to bestow themselves in the mines, took refuge under the railway bridge, where they were supplied with food by Dr. Smartt, who went about his work as calmly as though bursting shells were mere trifles unworthy of notice.

While Kimberley thus battled, Lord Methuen's force was at a standstill in front of Magersfontein. Christmas found him in the same position; but now came the news that Lord Roberts, V.C., had been appointed Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, with Lord Kitchener as his Chief of Staff. The appointment gave the greatest satisfaction, and the gratification of the Highland Brigade became complete when it was known that General Wauchope's successor was to be General Hector Macdonald, commonly called "Fighting Mac."

On New Year's Day 1900, Lieutenant-Colonel Pilcher, with a column mainly composed of colonials—Queenslanders and Canadians—recaptured Douglas. The main body of Lord Methuen's force, however, still remained stationary. In the neighbourhood of Modder River the Boers steadily extended their entrenchments, and by the beginning of the year the defences extended from Koodoesberg on the west to Magersfontein on the east—a distance of nearly fifty miles. Good roads connected all the principal points of the line, and taking into consideration the strength and extreme mobility of the Boer force, it was clear that an attack was not to be lightly undertaken.

Several weeks had passed since the division had accomplished any work of great importance, and now the time came for another vigorous attempt to relieve Kimberley. Thousands of troops were being poured into the camp; General Macdonald had already arrived; General Kelly-Kenny came up with his division; on the eighth of February Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener arrived from Cape Town, and General French brought up most of his cavalry from Rensburg. Several important changes were also made in the brigade commands, for General Sir H. E. Colville left the Guards' Brigade, to take command of the 9th Division, and Colonel Douglas, Lord Methuen's chief of staff, took charge of the 9th Brigade *vice* General Pole-Carew, who was transferred to the Guards' Brigade.

By the eleventh of February all the cavalry had concentrated at Modder River, where three brigades were formed, and placed respectively under the command of Brigadier-General Broadwood, Brigadier-Gen-

eral Porter, and Brigadier-General Gordon. Six batteries of field artillery and seven batteries of horse artillery completed the force; and the whole column, under the general command of General French, marched down to Ramdam.

Two infantry divisions, commanded by Generals Tucker and Kelly-Kenny, followed close on General French's heels, and joined him at the Reit River. Waterval Drift was held by a small Boer force, which, though it had good cover in a network of dry ravines, was not strong enough to engage a large body of troops, and was obliged to retire after a few rounds from the howitzers.

The steep banks of the stream, however, presented a serious obstacle, and the mule teams drawing the transport wagons were brought to a sudden standstill. The animals were quite able to take their loads down to the river bed; but to haul them up the farther bank was another matter, and the wagons stuck fast until a number of oxen were set to work to help the overburdened mules. The difficulty was increased by a terrific dust storm, which raged through the night; but the men worked doggedly, and, as De Kiel Drift was also seized, by daylight most of the guns and wagons had crossed the stream.

General French, meanwhile, was pressing forward rapidly; at one o'clock on Tuesday morning he bivouacked at Wagdraas, and thence went on his way towards Klip Drift, on the Modder, leaving the infantry which followed in his wake to hold the captured positions. It was a trying march both for men and horses, for scorching heat during the day was followed at night by a terrific thunderstorm and torrents of

rain, which converted the road into a kind of bog; the Boers harassed the flanks, and at one place their fire set the grass alight, and it blazed up around the horses, many of whom died from exhaustion before the drift was reached. Then came a few hours' welcome rest; but dawn showed the enemy entrenched on the farther side, and again it fell to the lot of the artillery to clear the way.

A naval twelve-pounder was ordered forward to a ridge commanding the drift, and when other guns also came into action the Boers were driven from their trenches, leaving behind them most of their possessions, including a quantity of ammunition carefully packed in boxes labelled "Biscuits—Delagoa Bay."

Practically the road to Kimberley lay open, and leaving a detachment with some guns to guard the drift, General French and his cavalry pursued their way over the veldt. Once they came in contact with the enemy, who bespattered them with shrapnel; but the column turned the Boer flank, and after a sharp skirmish, rushed on in a cloud of dust towards Kimberley.

And now the distant thunder of heavy guns was heard, telling plainly that a furious bombardment was in progress. Louder and louder pealed the deep voices, nearer and nearer drew the relief column, and at last the good news of its approach was helioed to the hard-pressed garrison. The Boers did not wait for the arrival of the troops; with wonderful alacrity the guns were limbered up, and while the besieging force hurried from the neighbourhood, the garrison and townspeople with one accord turned out to meet and welcome the men whom rescued Kimberley delighted to honour.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE ADVANCE THAT FAILED.

AFTER the arrival of the first batch of troops at Durban, early in November, reinforcements poured into Natal, and on the nineteenth of the month Lieutenant-General Sir C. F. Clery assumed the chief command of all the British forces south of Ladysmith. A portion of his division at that time was with General Hildyard at Estcourt, and another and stronger force, commanded by Major-General Barton, was encamped at Mooi River, a locality where the Boers were particularly busy.

Several farms were raided, railway and telegraphic communication between Estcourt and Mooi River was suspended, and on the twenty-second of November and several succeeding days, the Mooi camp was intermittently shelled. In the meantime, however, reinforcements continued to come up. The Earl of Dundonald was put in command of the irregular cavalry; Major-General Lyttleton took charge of a force stationed at Nottingham Road; and as soon as railway communication was restored, General Barton with his column moved on to Estcourt. Thence he proceeded to Frere, where he joined General Hildyard; and on the second of December Sir C. F. Clery arrived

at the camp. On the fifth, General Sir Redvers Buller also came to the front, and a few days later the force advanced to the neighbourhood of Colenso.

South of the Tugela the country consists of bare, treeless veldt, here and there producing coarse grass, and rising occasionally into low, smooth hills, the highest of which, Hlangwane, lies several miles to the eastward of Colenso. On the northern bank the hills occupied by the Boers commanded the stream, and rose from small foot-hills near the bank to a long ridge of much higher and more rocky summits. The position was naturally one of great strength, and having been extensively fortified, was, to all intents and purposes, impregnable. Its real strength, however, was not known to General Buller, and the first item on his programme was the capture of the Boer trenches. With this end in view, he issued orders for an attack on the fifteenth of December.

Major-General Hart, with the 5th Brigade, was directed to leave camp at 4.30 a.m., cross the Tugela at Bridle Drift, about four miles upstream, and move along the left bank in the direction of Colenso Bridge, to meet Major-General Hildyard, whose brigade was charged with the duty of taking the bridge and storming the kopjes immediately beyond it. These two brigades were to be supported by the 4th Brigade, under Major-General the Hon. N. G. Lyttleton, who was ordered to advance to a point between the bridge and the railway, and there wait until his assistance should be required.

Meanwhile, Lord Dundonald, with a mounted brigade with one battery, was to cover the right flank of Major-General Hildyard's brigade, and endeavour to gain possession of Hlangwane Hill, whence he was to enfilade

the kopjes beyond the bridge. General Barton's brigade was, if necessary, to help Major-General Hart; part of the artillery, with the naval twelve-pounders, was to assist Major-General Lyttleton; while the remainder of the guns were directed to take up a position near the 6th Brigade, and prepare the way for Major-General Hildyard's advance.

General Hart's brigade, formed in quarter column, and led by the Dublin Fusiliers, started, as had been arranged, for Bridle Drift. But before the foremost ranks could gain the stream, a withering storm of shrapnel and Mauser bullets burst from the Boer trenches, and General Buller sent orders for a retirement. Before the messenger reached General Hart, the Dublins had dashed through Doorn's Spruit, which enters the Tugela near the drift; some of them actually reached the Tugela, and in the very teeth of the Boer fire succeeded in swimming across it.

Two of General Lyttleton's battalions and a couple of field batteries were then ordered forward to cover the retirement of the 5th Brigade, which seemed in a fair way to be cut to pieces, for at every step shells and rifle bullets crashed and pattered among the men, ploughing up the ground and filling the air with clouds of dust. Yet not a Boer was to be seen. A filmy line of smoke, so slight as to be almost invisible, was the only sign by which those death-dealing rifles could be located, and when the artillery opened fire the gunners found it almost impossible to distinguish the position of the trenches. Consequently, their attempts to silence the enemy's fire were unavailing; and as the men slowly and reluctantly fell back across the belt of death, a perfect blizzard of shot and shell pursued

them, overtook them, and laid them low with its murderous breath.

In the centre and on the right matters were going better. General Hildyard's brigade marched in extended order straight towards Colenso Bridge, led by the West Surreys (Queen's) and Devons, and on their right General Barton's brigade occupied a position on the plain near the railway. Of cover there was absolutely none, and the Boer guns on the kopjes at the back of the village sent continuous streams of shell among the advancing troops, who, nevertheless, maintained perfect order, and advanced as deliberately as if they were taking part in a review.

Meanwhile, the naval battery did its best to silence the enemy's guns; but they were well concealed, and as the Queen's neared Colenso, a galling fire opened from a line of trenches on the banks of the river. This, too, engaged the attention of the naval guns; but their efforts proved almost futile, since, owing to the position of the trenches, it was impossible for the shells to reach them. Consequently, the opposing fire continued unabated; and as the men gradually approached nearer and nearer to the bridge, fresh parties of riflemen came into action. Almost every house and building was manned; the river banks and the trenches sheltered hundreds of marksmen; the fortified hill known as Fort Wylie was a nest of sharpshooters, and bullets fell fast as tropical rain.

Meanwhile, Colonel Long, who had outstripped his infantry escort, advanced the 14th and 66th Batteries, and succeeded in temporarily clearing Fort Wylie. Under cover of the fire the Queen's pushed on, reached a sheltered trench, where the leading company halted

for a moment, and then, dashing forward from one patch of cover to another, company after company passed through the scrub. Colenso lay immediately ahead, and with another rush the British cleared several of the neighbouring trenches and gained a footing in the village.

Lord Dundonald's brigade had by this time reached the eastern slopes of Hlangwane Hill, where the men dismounted, and while the battery divided its attention between the hill and Colenso, attempted to make a flanking movement. But the flankers were themselves outflanked by a party of Boers, who engaged Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry so heavily that the force was brought to a standstill, and had its work cut out in holding its ground until an order to retire was received.

Fate, in the meantime, had dealt hardly with Colonel Long, whose unfortunate batteries had been almost wiped out by the murderous fire from the rifles and machine guns brought to bear upon them from the near bank of the Tugela. Colonel Long and Colonel Hunt, who commanded the 2nd Battery, were seriously wounded; most of the horses were shot down, and a number of the men also fell. But still, as long as the ammunition held out, the gunners went on firing, and it was not until scarcely a shot remained that Colonel Long unwillingly ordered the men to retire into a neighbouring donga, where the wounded had already been placed.

Meanwhile, Colonel Bullock had arrived on the scene with a reinforcement, but he could do nothing, and his party also took refuge in the donga. Then General Buller galloped up and asked for volunteers

to save the guns, which, of necessity, had been left where they were. Three drivers with six horses volunteered to try; but before they reached the first gun only one man and one horse were left, and the attempt had to be abandoned. A second futile dash was made, and then Captain Scofield, General Buller's A.D.C., Captain Congreve, Rifle Brigade, Lieutenant the Hon. F. Roberts, Corporal Nurse, and Drivers H. Taylor, Young, Petts, Rockall, Lucas, and Williams, of the 66th Battery, succeeded in bringing in two of the guns. But before they had accomplished their work a heavy fire was turned upon them; Lieutenant Roberts was mortally injured, several other men were hit, and the party was forced to retire to the donga. Captain H. L. Read of the 7th Battery, with thirteen men and twenty-two horses, then attempted to dash through the zone of fire and bring off the remaining guns. The distance was only five hundred yards; but long before the plucky fellows reached their destination, the captain and five of his men had been wounded, and another man and thirteen of the horses were killed.

In the teeth of such a murderous fire it was clear that nothing could be done, and when this party also was driven back to the donga General Buller refused to allow any further attempts to save the guns. Those, however, who had so gallantly endeavoured to perform an almost impossible feat were not forgotten, and Captain Congreve, Captain Read, Lieutenant Roberts, and Corporal Nurse were recommended for the Victoria Cross, while the medal for distinguished conduct in the field was awarded to the men who assisted them.

The loss of the guns, coupled with the disaster to

General Hart's brigade, made it clear to General Buller that the river could only be crossed after a reckless waste of life, and about 1.30 he gave orders for a retirement. The order, however, failed to reach Colonel Bullock, and after lying still in the donga until about five o'clock, the Boers discovered them, and they were compelled to surrender.

On the day after the battle a truce was proclaimed, in order that both sides might bury their dead. It concluded at midnight; and then, as water was scarce in the camp, two brigades were ordered back to Frere, where General Buller also took up his quarters. General Clery, with the rest of the force, remained at Chieveley; and the force rested to await the arrival of the 5th Division, commanded by Lieutenant-General Sir C. Warren.

By the end of the first week of January most of the expected stores and reinforcements had come up, and on the ninth General Buller began his forward move for the relief of Ladysmith. The direct route by way of Colenso and the railway line being hermetically sealed, he had a choice of two routes: one by way of Weenen through difficult, hilly country, which had, moreover, the disadvantage of approaching Ladysmith from the wrong side of the Boer positions on Bulwana and Lombard's Kop; the other route, which also lay through hilly country, was to the westward by way of Springfield and Acton Holmes. Both routes were equally roundabout; but on the whole, the advantage seemed to lie with the westward route, and the troops at Chieveley were moved down to Frere, where they were joined by Sir Charles Warren's division, which came up from Estcourt.

The advanced guard of cavalry, marching in light order, was able to move rapidly ; and that same evening Lord Dundonald, finding the way open before him, pushed on to the south bank of the Big Tugela, and encamped on the heights commanding Potgieter's Drift, about nine miles from Springfield. It had been intended that he should camp that night at Springfield Bridge, as it was supposed that the Boers occupied the hilly country between the Little and Big Tugelas ; but when the river began to rise, fearing lest their retreat might be cut off, they cautiously retired to the northern bank, and thus not a single man remained to oppose the British advance.

Early on the following morning the cavalry set out to reconnoitre the neighbourhood, and climbing to the top of a bushy ridge facing the drift, obtained a view of the Boers' position. On the farther side of the drift, and about five thousand yards distant, they occupied a line of kopjes known as Brakfontein Ridge. Gun emplacements and trenches were in course of construction, and farther to the west lay a lofty hill known as Spion Kop, which commanded all the surrounding heights. This also was dotted with rifle pits, but no guns could be seen upon it. Beyond Spion Kop again was a spur of the Drakenberg, called by the Basuto Thaba Emunyama, or the Black Mountain, and there too the Boers were posted.

Meanwhile, the long columns of infantry and transport wagons were slowly winding along the peculiarly bad roads between Frere and Springfield. Progress was necessarily deliberate ; but on the twelfth of January General Lyttleton's brigade joined Lord Dundonald, and a day or two later the naval guns began shelling

the Boer lines from Mount Alice, a lofty hill south of the Tugela. By the sixteenth, men and stores had come up, and at 2.30 that afternoon General Lyttleton was ordered to effect the crossing of Potgieter's Drift. Part of General Coke's brigade remained at Swartkop to guard Skiet's Drift, and the rest of the force, consisting of Lord Dundonald's mounted men, General Hildyard's, General Hart's, and General Woodgate's brigades, with six field batteries, under the general command of Sir Charles Warren, were sent up to Tritchard's Drift, five miles to the westward, where a simultaneous advance was to be made.

The Tugela happened to be unusually full, and as crossing it was a work of time, it was not until the nineteenth of January that the general advance began. Lord Dundonald, with some of the cavalry, had indeed already pushed ahead; but infantry move more slowly than cavalry; transport wagons were slower still; and finding that the only route lay along the front of the Boer position, General Warren decided to abandon the attempt to reach Ladysmith by that route, and the cavalry was recalled from Acton Holmes.

New plans had now to be made. Seeing that it was impossible to outflank the Boers, the only thing that remained was once more to risk a frontal attack. The best chance of success seemed to be offered by a scheme of battle which provided for the simultaneous employment of all the troops on the north side of the Tugela; and while General Lyttleton's guns raked the trenches in front of Potgieter's Drift, General Warren assailed the rugged slopes of Thaba Emunyama. At the point chosen, the ridge curved round in such a manner that the Boer position formed a rough semicircle, with Spion

Kop on the left, and in the centre of the amphitheatre thus formed was a stony kopje designated Three Tree Hill. This offered a convenient post for the artillery, and about 7 a.m. on the twenty-first the first shell screamed into the hastily-constructed schanzes which did duty for the trenches there had not been time to dig.

The infantry, meanwhile, was steadily pushing forward, until a thousand yards or so from the first line of schanzes all cover ceased. To attempt to cross the open ground in the teeth of the hailstorm of lead which issued from the defences was to walk into the very jaws of death, and a message was sent to the artillery that the guns must clear the way for a charge. For a quarter of an hour the iron hail continued to fall; and then suddenly the turmoil ceased, for, instead of charging, the infantry began to withdraw, and the gunners watched the regiments file down into the deep valleys on either side of the spur. The plan of battle had been changed, and for that day at least the idea of a general attack on the position was abandoned.

During the night the Boers withdrew to another ridge at the back of the original spur. Their new position was very similar to the old one, and was equally well fortified; manifestly it could only be carried at the cost of many lives, and when the men had taken possession of the deserted trenches, no further advance was attempted. Then the rifles began to talk; for two days the opposing forces faced each other, and a hot fire was kept up.

Speaking to the troops on the fifteenth of January General Buller had declared that they were going to the relief of their comrades at Ladysmith, and that there

could be no turning back. Consequently, though the Boer position was undeniably strong, and no way round it could be found, General Buller decided to risk a frontal attack. Reinforcements were brought up, and about midnight on the twenty-third of January Major-General Woodgate, with the Lancashire Brigade, and a hundred and ninety-four men of Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry, began cautiously to climb the heights under the guidance of Colonel Thorneycroft.

On reaching the summit the troops halted to fix bayonets, and then silently and cautiously proceeded along the triangular-shaped flat top of the hill towards the Boer position. After a few yards a challenge rang through the darkness. "Halt!" shouted a Dutch voice, "who goes there?" One of the officers responded with the countersign, "Waterloo;" and the next moment a burst of flame flashed from the rifles of the pickets who had challenged. But as the men threw themselves on their faces the bullets flew harmlessly overhead. The Lancashire men dashed forward, and the Boers broke into headlong flight. One alone held his ground, but he was laid low by a bayonet thrust, and a moment later General Woodgate's men were in possession of the trench. A few yards ahead, however, another trench sheltered a number of Boers, who in turn opened a heavy fire, until they also were dispersed by a bayonet charge. These two parties were apparently the only Boers on that part of the mountain, and when they had hurriedly taken their departure the Engineers who had accompanied the brigade set to work to improve the trenches, and generally strengthen the position.

Meanwhile, the batteries below raised their noisy voices, and shells fell fast on the ridge connecting

the various spurs, in order to prevent reinforcements arriving. The naval guns on Mount Alice also began pitching shells in the same direction. But the morning was dark and foggy, and the mist which shrouded the mountain top effectually covered the movements of the Boers, who took advantage of the fog to haul a number of guns to positions which commanded the British batteries. Sharpshooters also, familiar with every foot of the ground, took cover behind the rocks, and more and more Boers crept silently to the hilltop, where they lay in wait until the Lancashire men made a rush for the hidden marksmen. Then all over the hill a blaze of fire sprang up, and the "pom-poms," as the Maxim-Nordenfelts were nicknamed, belched forth streams of shells, which raked the summit from end to end.

Again and again the Lancashires charged, and again and again the deadly hail forced them back. But, nothing daunted, they too kept up a murderous fire, while the Boers with equal gallantry stubbornly held their ground, and hour after hour the battle raged without any particular advantage being gained by either side. The Lancashires, it is true, had lost their general, for early in the day a splinter of shell struck General Woodgate on the head and inflicted a dangerous injury. Sorely against his will he was carried from the field, and the command devolved on Colonel Thorneycroft.

The fight now waxed hotter and hotter, and by degrees the Boers began to make an impression. Disheartened and mowed down by the deadly shell and rifle fire, Colonel Thorneycroft's men began to falter, and little by little the Boers drove them back

and reoccupied some of the trenches. Then reinforcements came up, and once more the British obtained a firm grip of the position.

But there was little or no water on the hill, and when night fell the troops, who had lost heavily, were tired out by the long struggle. The post occupied by the 60th Rifles was particularly exposed, and as it could be seen from below that it would be impossible for them to render material assistance, an order for their retirement was sent up. It was addressed merely to the "O.C." (officer commanding), without any specification of regiment, and the missive was handed to Colonel Thorneycroft, who not unnaturally concluded that the order referred to the whole force. The word went round to regiment after regiment; but when it came to the turn of the Rifles the men almost refused to go, and it was only when they were told that the force holding Thaba Emunyama had retired that they could find it in their hearts to obey. It now became clear that the original order was not intended to be applied generally. Before the retirement began a mountain battery and a couple of naval guns were already on their way up the hills, and a company of Engineers had been ordered to accompany the guns for the purpose of entrenching the position. Nor did General Buller become aware of the evacuation until the following morning; but he fully concurred with Colonel Thorneycroft's action, and the force was withdrawn to a camp near Spearman's Farm, on the south bank of the Tugela.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

PAARDEBERG AND BLOEMFONTEIN.

EARLY in February a great change came over the face of affairs on the western frontier. While General French and his cavalry swept onward to Kimberley, General Kelly-Kenny advanced more slowly to guard the Klip and Rondevaal Drifts; General Tucker, accompanied by Lord Kitchener, and supported by the Guards' Brigade, advanced on Jacobsdal; while the force commanded by Lord Methuen still faced the Magersfontein trenches. These sudden and unexpected movements were disastrous to the Boer cause. Within seven days of Lord Roberts' arrival at Modder River, British troops occupied a considerable extent of Free State ground, and General Cronje awoke to the fact that he had been outflanked. His forces at Magersfontein and Spytfontein were cut off from their base at Bloemfontein, and to endeavour to continue holding the positions was merely to court disaster. General Cronje was too wise a leader not to be aware that his only chance of carrying on the conflict lay in immediate retreat; and on Thursday, the fifteenth of February, the evacuation of Magersfontein began.

At midnight five thousand Boers, with guns and wagons, left the trenches, and passing along the front

of the British guns, silently trekked eastward. They were, however, just a little too late in starting, for before they were out of sight day broke, and the retreating column was revealed to the British sentries. In an instant the guns opened fire, and then the Mounted Infantry, having crossed the drift, galloped out with the view of heading off the Boers. The infantry followed suit, and soon was hotly engaged.

The Boers, however, took up a position on some conveniently-situated kopjes, and there the rearguard stood at bay to cover the retreat of the main body. Then the artillery was brought into action, while the rearguard retired; and later on, after a long day of fighting, General Cronje, with his main force, again trekked towards Klip Kraal Drift, six miles to the eastward. Still the rearguard covered the movement, and then, though closely pursued, and compelled to contest every foot of the way, managed in its turn to reach the drift and cross it.

The Modder River was thus left behind, and Cronje, with his five thousand, moved off in the direction of Bloemfontein.

But Generals Kelly-Kenny and Macdonald, with the 6th Division, still followed; and early on the morning of Sunday, the eighteenth of February, Kelly-Kenny overtook the retreating Boers at Koodoostand Drift, near Paardeberg, where they were in laager. At dawn a fierce battle began, and by nightfall, after a day spent in fighting, Cronje's force was surrounded. Every outlet was closed, and the hapless Boers found themselves in a veritable death trap.

During the night silence reigned, but when Monday morning broke it was seen that the Boers had taken

advantage of the darkness to entrench their position. No attempt was made by the British to carry the laager by storm, and that day most of the infantry rested, though the artillery kept up a somewhat desultory fire, and some of the Mounted Infantry seized a good position on the west side of the laager. With the exception of a bombardment of the laager in the evening, nothing very definite was done; and yet every move of the British brought the inevitable end a little nearer.

Lord Roberts reached the scene of action on Monday afternoon, and on the following day, as the Boers still grimly held out, he gave orders for a terrific bombardment. "The lyddite shells," says an eye-witness, "raised great clouds of green smoke, which filled the bed of the river, while shrapnel burst along the edge of each bank, except for a small space where the proximity of our infantry would have made the artillery fire dangerous to them.

"Our shells searched every bush and every ravine on the river banks. The enfilading guns must have done terrible execution, yet in a spirit of desperate madness now and again a Boer would attempt a sniping shot at one of the naval guns, which were firing at a range of only a thousand yards.

"On each side of the river lay two battalions, the whirring of whose Maxim fire sounded petty by the side of the deafening roar of the big guns, which belched death from two long lines on either bank."

But still—grimly, sternly—Cronje held out. He and those with him could die—they could not surrender; for as yet their spirit was unbroken, and death seemed preferable to submission. And so on

Wednesday, the fourth day of the defence, the Boers greeted the besiegers of the laager with a furious burst of rifle fire.

By this time General French had come up with his cavalry, and while Generals Knox and Smith-Dorrien pressed closer on the laager, he seized a strong position on a kopje previously occupied by the Boers. Thus day after day passed. Every hour brought the end nearer, for slowly and steadily Lord Roberts drew in his lines, and Cronje was hopelessly surrounded. Yet for eight days he managed to hold out.

It was on the anniversary of the Amajuba fight that the Boers at last surrendered—simply because, having endured all the horrors that human nature could endure, further resistance had become impossible. A white flag was displayed, and shortly afterwards a note addressed to Lord Roberts announced General Cronje's unconditional surrender. General Pretzman was sent to receive his submission, and about 7 a.m. the Boer general walked out to Lord Roberts' camp, whence, with the other prisoners, he was sent to Cape Town, and eventually to St. Helena.

For several days Lord Roberts remained at Osfontein, where he had taken up his quarters after General Cronje's surrender; and then—March 6—orders were issued for a further advance on the morrow. Long before dawn on the seventh the troops were astir, and the men marched in silence until, about 7 a.m., they came in sight of the Boer position at Poplar Drift.

Lord Roberts' telegram to the Secretary of State respecting the action which followed was short and to the purpose. He said: "We have had a very success-

ful day, and completely routed the enemy, who are in full retreat. The position they occupied is extremely strong, and cunningly arranged with a second line of entrenchments, which would have caused us heavy loss had a direct attack been made. The turning movement was necessarily wide, owing to the nature of the ground, and the cavalry and horse artillery horses are much done up. The fighting was practically confined to the cavalry division, which, as usual, did exceedingly well, and French reports that the horse artillery batteries did a great deal of execution amongst the enemy."

After the action at Poplar Drift, Lord Roberts continued his advance on Bloemfontein, and on the tenth of March his force again came in contact with the Boers, who were encountered at Abramskraal, near Driefontein. This time the brunt of the fighting fell to General Kelly-Kenny's division, "two battalions of which," says Lord Roberts, "the Welsh and the Essex, turned the Boers out of two strong positions at the point of the bayonet." The artillery did equally good service, and after fighting till sunset, the Boers were compelled to retire.

The battle near Driefontein was but an interlude in the advance, and on Monday, the twelfth of March, Lord Roberts reached Ventersvlei. He was then only sixteen miles from Bloemfontein, and on the same day General French seized the railway south of the town. President Steyn withdrew that night from his menaced capital, and a telegram from Lord Roberts, dated Bloemfontein, the thirteenth of March, 8 p.m., thus informed the British Government: "By the help of God, and by the bravery of her Majesty's soldiers, the troops under my command have taken possession of Bloemfontein. The

British flag now flies over the presidency, vacated last evening by Mr. Steyn, late president of the Orange Free State. Mr. Fraser, member of the late executive government, the mayor, the secretary to the late government, the landdrost, and other officials, met me two miles from the town, and presented me with the keys of the public offices. The enemy have withdrawn from the neighbourhood, and all seems quiet. The inhabitants of Bloemfontein gave the troops a cordial welcome."

So ended one act of the drama.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE SIEGE AND RELIEF OF LADYSMITH.

THE fighting around Ladysmith on the second and third of November was followed by a short armistice. On the seventh, however, hostilities recommenced, and late on the evening of the eighth some of the troops, unobserved by the besiegers, took up positions on hills near the town. This was the prelude to a sharp engagement, in which the British gained a decided advantage. By midday, however, the fighting was over, and at one o'clock a royal salute of twenty-one guns was fired in honour of the Prince of Wales's birthday.

By the twenty-fourth of November eleven hundred shells had fallen in the town and the adjacent camps, but so little injury was done to life and property that, except when the fire became disagreeably hot, the artillery seldom troubled to return it.

The worst feature of the siege was the persistent shelling of the Town Hall, which was used as an hospital for the sick. The Geneva Red Cross flag waved above it; and though General White made several representations to Mr. Schalk Burgher, who had succeeded General Joubert in the conduct of the siege, no notice was taken of his remonstrance. A neutral

camp for the sick and the non-combatants had been established during the armistice, and Mr. Burgher, having pointed out that this was the case, and that the sick would there be in safety, continued to fire at the Town Hall.

On the seventh of December a sortie was planned by General Sir Archibald Hunter, and shortly before midnight he left camp with about six hundred men. No. 10 Mounted Battery was also represented, and a few Royal Engineers accompanied the party to the foot of Lombard's Kop, which was the point selected for attack. About 2.30 in the morning the force halted at the foot of the hill, where the final preparations were quickly concluded. General Hunter led the storming party, which consisted of a few Engineers, the artillerymen, and two hundred men supplied by the Natal Carbineers and the Imperial Light Horse. The rest of the Carbineers, with seventy Border Mounted Rifles, were told off to cover the advance from the left, and the balance of the force went round to the right and took up a position between Gun Hill and Pepworth's Hill. As silently as possible the men scrambled over the rocky ground, stumbling into holes, scrambling and slipping over loose stones, but still grimly keeping silence for fear of alarming the sentries, who apparently did not keep a strict lookout.

For a time not a Boer was seen, but about half way up the hill a sentry shouted, "Who is there?" No answer was given, and again the challenge rang through the darkness. Still no answer, and the warning shout changed to "Stop, or I shall shoot." But even the threat of shooting failed to elicit a reply. The next moment a rifle bullet whistled harmlessly

over the men, who had thrown themselves on the ground.

The noise brought a number of Boers to the summit. "Who is there?" they shouted, following up the question with an ineffectual volley. Springing up, the men returned the volley, and again dropped, to lie still until the order was given, "Fix bayonets—charge."

But the Boers did not wait for the charge. When the troops reached the summit the gunners were already in full retreat. The victory had been an easy one, and the artillerymen forthwith set to work to dismantle and destroy the guns. In half an hour the whole thing was at an end, and the party marched off highly elated at the success of the enterprise.

Throughout December the bombardment continued intermittently; but though several of the principal buildings, including the Town Hall, the English Church, the Royal Hotel, the Standard Bank, and the convent, were seriously damaged, in proportion to the number of shells fired surprisingly little injury was inflicted. On the eighteenth, however, a shell which dropped in the camp of the Natal Carbineers killed and wounded several men; and during another heavy bombardment on the twenty-second the Gloucesters sustained twenty casualties. The garrison had also been somewhat weakened by disease, for enteric fever had broken out; and though the proportion of deaths was not large, a number of men had to be removed to the neutral camp hospital.

Inside the circle of hills occupied by the besieging force was another line of smaller heights. Starting from the north, the inner line, which was held by the garrison, ran along the hills from the railway, and

passing round by Helpmakaar Hill on the eastward, included the racecourse, and continued the line on the south in a long, flat-topped hill called Cæsar's Camp, which rises about eight hundred feet above the level of the town. This hill, which from the beginning of the siege was occupied by the 1st Manchester Regiment, the 42nd Field Battery, and a naval gun, is connected by a kotal with another smaller plateau called Wagon Hill, which in turn is connected with a similar plateau called Wagon Hill West. These plateaus were held respectively by half a battalion of the 60th Rifles, and by a couple of squadrons of the Imperial Light Horse. Then turning northward, the line of defences ran up the western side of the town, where the principal hills were known as Red Hill and Rifleman's Post.

To hold this long line of defences, Sir George White had only about ten thousand men; and at no point, therefore, was it possible that a very strong force could be stationed. Consequently, when the advance of the relief forces rendered it necessary, from the Boer point of view, to bring the siege to a speedy conclusion, General Joubert probably expected to find no great difficulty in carrying the southern line of defence by storm, and he himself came up from Colenso with a reinforcement to direct the attack. The time selected was in the small hours of the sixth of January, and the attacking force, which consisted largely of Free Staters, assembled, apparently, in a dry water-course known as Fourier's Spruit, which runs along the southern base of Cæsar's Camp. At the very outset they rushed an outlying picket of the Imperial Light Horse, taking the four men of which it consisted so thoroughly by surprise that they were unable to give the alarm.

As the three southern positions were to be attacked simultaneously, the force was divided; and while the Free Staters ascended Wagon Hill West and Wagon Hill proper, a Transvaal commando, which also divided itself into two parts, scrambled up the steep slopes of Cæsar's Camp. It so chanced that the attacking party reached the crest just at the time when the sentries were being changed, and Sergeant Warrington of the Manchesters, while superintending the work of relieving guard, came suddenly almost into the very arms of the Boers. They were anxious, above all things, to complete the surprise, and fearing to alarm the camp by firing, they met the sergeant with guile, shouting, "Town guard," in the hope, no doubt, that he would take them for a detachment of the civilian guard. "Hold up your hands; don't fire," they went on. But somehow Sergeant Warrington's suspicions were roused, and as he flatly refused to do as he was told, the Boers fired. Warrington and his men were shot down, and before the Manchesters had any idea of what was taking place, the outer trenches were occupied by the enemy.

Meanwhile, the Free Staters had scrambled quietly up Wagon Hill, and reached the crest unnoticed. It so happened that Sir George White had decided to post the guns on Wagon Hill, and some Gordons and sappers, who were entrusted with the work, were at that very time hauling up the guns. The force on the summit, therefore, was stronger than usual; and but for this circumstance Wagon Hill West must inevitably have been isolated. But here, too, the attacking party arrived just as the guard was being changed. The picket was driven in, and the next moment the hilltop was a

scene of the wildest confusion. But the Boers had the advantage, and after a few minutes of indiscriminate fighting the defenders were driven back, and the enemy gained possession of the hill.

On Wagon Hill, also, the fray had begun. When day broke the Boers were in possession of the nek leading to Wagon Hill West, and had partly possessed themselves of the plateau of Wagon Hill itself. Two squadrons of the Light Horse had been almost wiped out, but a few of the 60th Rifles and the remainder of the Light Horse had taken cover among some rocks, whence they kept up a deadly fire, which forced the Boers also to keep in cover, and thus prevented them from fully possessing themselves of the bullet-swept plateau.

Wagon Hill West was in a similar condition. With the exception of a solitary wagon and team the plateau was entirely deserted, and Lieutenant Digby Jones, R.E., who had succeeded in rallying his men, had taken possession of the inner slope, while the Boers in like manner occupied the outer slope. Neither party, however, dared venture on to the plateau itself, for the ground was swept by a cross fire from the 60th Rifles on Wagon Hill, and from Boer marksmen stationed among the boulders on the nek.

Assistance was, however, already on the way, for as soon as it became clear that the attack was serious, General Ian Hamilton, who commanded this portion of the defences, telephoned for reinforcements. The first to arrive was a detachment of Gordon Highlanders; and Captain Carnegie, with one company, dashed up to Cæsar's Camp, rushed a sangar occupied by the Boers, and freed Lieutenant Hunt-Grubbe, who had been taken prisoner early in the fight.

More troops were by this time on the way, and about four o'clock Colonel Dick Cunyngham, V.C., with the remaining companies of the Gordons, was ordered up to Cæsar's Camp. Almost before they were clear of the town a stray bullet mortally wounded Colonel Cunyngham, who was carried back to camp, while the Gordons, a detachment of the Imperial Light Horse, half a battalion of the 1st 60th, and four companies of the Rifle Brigade hurried to take part in the fray. Two batteries were also ordered out, and while the 21st Battery went westward to cover the approaches to Wagon Hill, the 53rd Battery was stationed in a position which commanded the outer side of Cæsar's Camp. Here it was, unfortunately, within range of the big guns on Lombard's Kop and Bulwana; and while Major Abdy and his gunners swept the Boers' line of ascent with a murderous storm of shrapnel, they in turn were bombarded by the distant Boer guns.

The gunners had found the exact range, and shells came tumbling thick and fast among the guns, and bursting on the ground or in the air, scattered their fragments in all directions. Guns and gunners were hit again and again, but still the artillerymen held their ground; and not only was no gun put out of action, but even when sometimes a shell burst almost on the top of a gun, the next moment those of the crew who survived fired as coolly and deliberately as if nothing unusual had occurred.

Between eleven and twelve o'clock Colonel Park, with three companies of the Devons, reinforced the troops on Wagon Hill, where Major Miller-Walnut, with a company of Gordons and two companies of the 60th, had already arrived. For a couple of hours

or so there was a lull, and then, about two o'clock, the Boers made another rush, with the result that the men who held the sangar on the crest of Wagon Hill West were seized with panic, fled from their shelter, and took refuge a little way down the slope. This time, however, the attacking party was but a handful of men, and of those who came up to the plateau only two continued the rush. One of them was Commandant De Villiers, the leader of the commando, who, with his companion, made a dash for the gun epaulement, where Major Miller-Walnut, Lieutenant Digby Jones, and a few sappers stood with fixed bayonets. The major and one of the sappers were instantly shot. As they fell, Lieutenant Digby Jones sprang forward and shot the commandant, but only to fall himself a moment later. The whole thing passed in a few moments, but the new attack indicated that the Boers had not yet lost heart, and General Hamilton sent up a dismounted party of the 18th Hussars to reoccupy the plateau.

Rain had been threatening all day, and about four o'clock the clouds sent down such a deluge of water as is rarely seen even in South Africa. It was just what the Boers had been desiring as a cover for their movements, and they forthwith made another rush for Wagon Hill West. Again the troops broke and ran madly before the attacking force; but one or two officers contrived to rally the fleeing men, and facing round, they swept over the plateau and drove back the Boers at the point of the bayonet. A simultaneous assault was made on Wagon Hill, where the Boers now appeared with redoubled energy. Fighting became hotter than ever, and the capture of the plateau seemed

imminent, when Colonel Park was asked by General Hamilton to try to clear the hill.

Park replied that the Devons would do their best, and after a few cheery words from their colonel the men sprang forward with a cheer as the bugle sounded the charge. The ground they had to cross was perfectly flat and open, without bush or rock to afford a single scrap of cover; and in front of them, and on the right and left, were the Boer marksmen, waiting to pour in their fire at far shorter range than had proved so deadly at Dargai.

As the first line of bayonets appeared over the ridge a blaze of light sprang from behind every rock, boulder, and sangar on the farther crest, and the crackling rattle of rifles sounded from end to end of the long line. Down went many of the Devons; but the survivors, with Colonel Park at their head, dashed forward, though their number grew less for every yard of ground that they crossed, and almost every officer was killed or wounded. At last those who still remained alive were within fifteen yards of the rifle muzzles, and then the Boers, seeing that there was no hope of stopping that desperate rush, broke from their cover, and shouting, "Bayonet! bayonet!" sought shelter down the slope, while the Devons seized the deserted sangar.

The charge of the Devons practically won the day; and now the rain, which at first had favoured the Boers, turned against them. Every watercourse became a raging torrent, and a rapidly-filling spruit at the bottom of the hill, which bade fair to cut off their retreat, compelled them to retire.

Simultaneous attacks had been made with equally little success on Observation Hill, on the north of the

town. Once, indeed, the Boers managed to gain a footing; but the Leicesters and Liverpools, assisted by the Devons, drove them back. Both sides lost terribly; but though the Boers admitted that the defeat was the most severe that up to that time they had sustained, they showed no intention of abandoning the siege. The defenders of Ladysmith, on the other hand, notwithstanding a heavy loss, had taken new heart from their success; and when a congratulatory telegram from the Queen was flashed to them by General Buller from his camp near Colenso, their satisfaction was complete. The day was nicknamed "Splendid Saturday," and on the following Tuesday a thanksgiving service for the victory was held.

Though the assault had been repulsed, and not a single position had been captured by the besieging force, as the month went on the prospects of the town looked blacker and blacker. Not that the courage and determination either of civilians or soldiers failed for a moment: every man and woman in the place was sternly resolved to hold out to the last, and to die rather than surrender. But disease was rife; day after day the death-roll lengthened, and famine stared the plucky garrison in the face. Luxuries, however dear to memory, had long been lost to sight. By the middle of January a dozen eggs were sold for nineteen shillings, a tin of jam could not be bought under six shillings and sixpence, and for condensed milk ten shillings per tin was asked. Other articles were equally scarce, but still the ever-increasing privations were cheerfully borne, and the messages flashed to the relief force by the heliograph continued cheery and hopeful.

February came, and day by day the hopes of the garrison sank lower. Rations had been reduced, and though for a time horse and mule flesh figured largely in the bill of fare, as the men grew weaker these articles of food disagreed with many of them. Vegetables became an almost unobtainable luxury: a big pumpkin fetched twelve shillings, a small marrow was valued at half that sum, and tobacco cost £4, 10s. per pound. Eggs rose to thirty-six shillings per dozen, and a case of whisky which was raffled brought its owner £145.

But with provisions at famine prices food became scarcer and scarcer, and about the end of the month the daily ration issued to each man had been reduced to a quarter of a pound of biscuits, three ounces of meal, an ounce of sugar, a pound of meat, a sixth of an ounce of tea, and a pinch of salt, pepper, etc. The poor fellows were on the brink of starvation; Sir George White was ill from fever and anxiety, and the necessity of surrender stared him in the face. There was little chance that another attack could be repelled, but the cheery messages sent out misled the Boers as to the strength and power of resistance of the garrison.

Moreover, they had their hands full elsewhere, and thus for one reason and another the assault which must have succeeded was not delivered. What force did not attempt, however, famine was on the very verge of accomplishing, and at the end of the month Sir George White was forced to the conclusion that it would be impossible to hold out for more than another week.

Meanwhile, General Buller was making renewed efforts to reach the beleaguered town. For a few

days after his repulse at Spion Kop he remained quietly on the British side of the Tugela, gathering up his energies for further endeavours; and then, on February 5, the Boer positions near the river were once more attacked. After a sharp fight Vaalkrantz was carried; and the next day, while the infantry was busy making good the position, a shot from one of the naval guns plumped down into the Boer magazine, which was totally destroyed. Throughout that day the guns thundered ceaselessly, and the Boers made desperate endeavours to recover Vaalkrantz. Fighting continued until 9 p.m., and when at last the din of battle ceased the British still held their hardly-gained advantage. One step had been made, but still the way to Ladysmith was closed; and on Wednesday, February 7, the opposing artillery still boomed forth defiance with a voice which all the endeavours of the British gunners failed to silence.

That same day a reconnoitring party made an ascent in one of the military balloons. It was already known that artillery had been posted on the crest and slopes of Doorn Kloof, on the right of the British line of advance, and this General Buller had taken into account when laying his plans. But now the investigations made from the balloon revealed a state of affairs which up to that time had been quite unexpected, for it was seen that Doorn Kloof bristled with masked guns, some of them of very heavy calibre. To attempt to pass them was to walk into a death trap, and once more General Buller was compelled to retire to the Tugela.

The relief of Kimberley now made a diversion, which was the first step towards the inevitable end of the war. Defeat and disaster in the Free State could

scarcely fail to discourage, and, to some extent, demoralize the burghers fighting in the east. On February 18 and 19, the strongly-defended positions on Monte Cristo, Cingolo, and Hlangwane Hill were captured by the British forces, and on February 20 General Hart's brigade occupied Colenso. Two days later all General Buller's infantry crossed the Tugela. But Pieter's Hill was still occupied by the Boers; and there, on February 23, General Hart with his Irish brigade had a tough fight, in which the Inniskillings suffered severely without succeeding in the attempt to oust the defenders. Every foot of ground was contested; but though for the time the Boers managed to hold their own on Pieter's, they were gradually driven from other positions, and on February 27 General Buller made an attack in force on the hill.

This time the attempt was crowned with success. Pieter's was captured, and on the nineteenth anniversary of "Majuba Day" the British defeat on Amajuba was wiped out.

The way to Ladysmith was thus opened, and on February 28 a cavalry brigade commanded by Lord Dundonald made a dash for the town, while a second brigade under Colonel Burn Murdoch advanced on Bulwana. By this time the long-suffering garrison was terribly reduced. Many had fallen, a still greater number had been laid low by disease, while overwork, anxiety, and short commons had brought the survivors to a pitiable state of weakness. But their troubles were at last at an end, for while the heliograph was flashing the good tidings of approaching relief to the town, Lord Dundonald and his men were galloping onwards. Nearer and nearer they drew, and before night fell, on

February 28, the relief party had entered the town. Men, women, and children, white and black, turned out to meet their rescuers, and foremost amongst that rejoicing crowd was Sir George White, whose few manly words of congratulation to those who had so unselfishly aided and supported him made a fitting conclusion to a gallant defence.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE SIEGE AND RELIEF OF MAFEKING.

THE mishap to the armoured train at Kraaipan on the twelfth of October inaugurated a series of skirmishes in the neighbourhood of Mafeking.

On the thirteenth Colonel Baden-Powell learned that a quantity of dynamite was stored at the station. He forthwith ordered its removal to a safe distance, and two trucks were hastily loaded, coupled to an engine, and started off to a distant siding. Before the train reached its destination, however, a party of Boers caught sight of it, and supposing, probably, that it was another armoured train, began blazing at it. As it was manifest that an explosion was imminent, the driver uncoupled his engine, left the trucks to their fate, and steamed at full speed towards Mafeking. He was only just in time, for a few moments afterwards a deafening explosion dashed him forcibly against the side of the cab, and almost threw the engine from the rails. The exact effect on the Boers was not ascertained, but as they had come to fairly close quarters before the trucks blew up they probably lost heavily.

In the early hours of the fourteenth of October a messenger galloped into the town with the news that a

patrol, commanded by Captain Lord Charles Bentinck, had become engaged with the enemy. The report was confirmed by the sound of distant firing, and Captain Williams, B.S.A.P., was ordered to proceed at once with the armoured train to the scene of action. In less than three-quarters of an hour he had come up with Lord Charles's squadron, and hurrying forward another couple of miles, found the Boers posted on the right of the line. The train Maxims opened fire, and while bullets streamed in rapid succession from their muzzles the Boers replied with a torrent of shells from their quick-firing guns.

When the fight had continued for some time Colonel Baden-Powell directed Captain Fitzclarence to withdraw his men; but being hampered with wounded he was unable to do so, and Lord Charles Bentinck was sent with a reinforcement to assist him. The Boers, however, now decided to withdraw, and by midday the force was once more safe in Mafeking.

Sunday, the fifteenth of October, passed quietly, but on Monday the bombardment began. Thirteen shells were fired into the town without doing any harm whatever; the fourteenth hit Riesle's Hotel, and was followed by a succession of shots, three of which landed on the convent where the Red Cross flag was flying, while another killed a poor dog. The bombardment was followed by the arrival of a messenger, who brought a dispatch from General Cronje calling on Colonel Baden-Powell to surrender, in order to "save further bloodshed."

So little damage had been done that the argument fell flat, and the colonel's only reply was an inquiry as to when the said bloodshed was likely to begin.

Another spell of quiet ensued, and then early on Tuesday, the twenty-fourth of October, the bombardment recommenced. A heavy gun had been brought up, and during the afternoon a ceaseless storm of missiles, large and small, was directed at the town.

One of the most unpleasant parts of the bombardment was the impossibility of adequately replying, for not a gun in the town was of sufficiently long range to reach "Kratjie," as the big gun was called; and as far as possible, the enemy was careful to avoid showing himself or his guns anywhere within range.

Curiously small effect resulted from the persistent long range shell fire; but towards the end of the week Colonel Baden-Powell observed that the Boers were constructing new trenches unpleasantly near the town. It was desirable that the operations should be stopped, and Captain Fitzclarence, with a squadron of the Protectorate Regiment, made a night attack on the new works. The surprise was complete; but when, after a few minutes' tough work with the bayonet, the party retired, the Boers opened fire, and Fitzclarence and several of his men were hit. The sortie, however, was entirely successful, for the Boers retired, and made no further attempt to complete the trenches.

Towards the end of October, Piet Cronje, the son of General Cronje, became dissatisfied with his father's method of conducting the siege, and on the last day of the month he made a determined attack on Cannon Kopje, a fortified hill near the town. The result was disastrous, for when the fight was over, the British still held their ground, and Piet Cronje had fallen with a mortal injury.

The first week of November passed without any special occurrence, except the death of Mr. Parslow, *The Daily Chronicle* war correspondent, who was killed in the street by the discharge of an officer's pistol. On the seventh of November, however, a plucky sortie was made by Major Godley, with a small force. The plan was to advance by night to the laager on the west of the town, fire a few volleys, and then retire, in the hope of tempting the Boers to leave their defences. Not a single hitch occurred in the arrangements, for the men reached their posts without being discovered, rapidly fired several rounds, and then withdrew, followed by the Boers, who had fallen unsuspectingly into the trap laid for them. No sooner were they conveniently within range than the town guns thundered. Many of the luckless Boers went down like ninepins, and the survivors, discovering the error into which they had been betrayed, promptly retired.

The Boers now settled down to a steady siege, the principal feature of which was the intermittent bombardment of the town. At first, as most of the shells were fired at very long range, the damage done was trifling; people were lured into a fancied security, and many went about their business in a fashion which was scarcely consistent with prudence. About the middle of November, however, the bombardment became more alarming, for, working cautiously and steadily, the Boers drew their parallels nearer and nearer, additional guns were brought up, and the bombardment became more vigorous.

Streets and houses were equally unsafe; business was of necessity suspended; and all who were not on

duty elsewhere found it desirable to spend much time in cellars and stuffy underground shelters. These were far from sanitary; and though, so far, the general health continued good, fears were entertained that the rainy season would be marked by an outbreak of disease. Still, things might have been worse, for food and water were abundant, and apart from the shells, the deadly monotony of life in a besieged town was the worst evil from which the inhabitants suffered.

On the eighteenth of November General Cronje, who up to this time had conducted operations, left the Boer lines with a number of burghers and about two hundred wagons. Some sanguine spirits were of opinion that the siege was practically raised; but General Snyman, who succeeded to the command, never for a moment relaxed his vigilance; shell-fire and sniping went on as before, and the trenches were brought nearer and nearer to the town.

The garrison, on the other hand, pushed the defensive trenches outward, until the two forces were actually within shouting distance of each other.

Christmas Day was celebrated by a reconnaissance, the result of which was that Colonel Baden-Powell determined to make an assault on the enemy's works at Game Tree, a couple of miles from the town. The armoured train was sent out with Hotchkiss guns and Maxims, and under cover of the darkness halted a few hundred yards from the Boer posts; while the artillery took a position on the extreme left, and Captain Fitzclarence and Captain Vernon, with two squadrons of the Protectorate Regiment, advanced towards the east side of the entrenchment. Earthworks were thrown up, Lord Charles Bentinck, with a reserve squadron,

was stationed on the right of the guns, and every preparation was made for an attack which should have been successful had the Boers been ignorant of Colonel Baden-Powell's intentions. As it was, they had apparently received full information, and under cover of the darkness they too made their arrangements. Sharpshooters were posted in the scrub around the fort, the defences were strengthened, and the garrison was doubled.

Day had scarcely dawned, when the stillness was broken by the deep voices of the British guns. Maxims and Hotchkiss quick-firers joined the noisy chorus, and a stream of iron and lead was poured into the fort, until, at a signal from Captain Vernon, the bombardment ceased, and the storming-party dashed forward. The task proved harder than was expected; for as soon as the advance began a tornado of bullets swept over the ground, mowing down the men as they approached. One of the first to fall was Captain Sandford of the Indian Staff Corps. Captain Vernon and Lieutenant Paton were shot dead in a gallant attempt to storm the defences, and the men, finding themselves leaderless, recoiled for a moment. Again they dashed forward, but only to be once more repulsed; and at last, seeing that the fort was impregnable, they retired discomfited from the attack.

Day after day passed without any event of importance to break the monotony, and in January it became necessary to put the garrison on reduced rations. "The reductions in bread," wrote *The Times* correspondent, on the twentieth of January, "took place in the early part of the year, while the orders in relation to the meat supply were issued during this week.

Matches and milk are prohibited from public sale, and the latest order prevents the shops from opening. All supplies of biscuits, tea, and sugar—preserves also—have been commandeered. It is, perhaps, difficult to define precisely what in the present circumstances are luxuries; but lest there should be any doubt upon the point, the price of every variety of comestible has been inflated to an abnormal value. The shopkeepers and hotel proprietors—and, indeed, anybody who can find any possible excuse for doing so—have trebled the price of their goods, pleading that the inflation is due to the siege. In many instances there is no reason which justifies such an action, but each merchant in his turn puts the blame on some one else. Accordingly, meal and flour have jumped from 27s. per bag to 50s.; potatoes, where they exist at all, are £2 per cwt.; fowls are 7s. 6d. each; and eggs, 12s. per dozen. Milk and vegetables can no longer be obtained, and rice has taken the place of the latter upon the menus. These figures mark the rise in the more important food-stuffs as sold across the counter; but the hotels have, in sympathy, followed the example—they, upon their part, attributing it to the increase which the wholesale merchants have decreed. A peg of whisky is 1s. 6d.; ‘dop’ brandy, 1s.; gin, 1s.; large stout is 4s.; small beer, 2s. In ordinary times, whisky retails at 5s. per bottle. This rate has now advanced to 18s. per bottle, and 80s. per case. ‘Dop,’ which is usually 1s. 4d., is now 12s. per bottle; the difference upon beer is almost two hundred per cent.; and inferior cigarettes are now 18s. per 100.”

The siege operations and the resistance opposed to them now took a steady and somewhat sullen aspect.

Sorties no longer formed part of the programme, and as the Boers did not attempt to carry the town by assault, life in Mafeking became one monotonous round of quiet endurance. Constant watch was kept, and while the trenches were pushed nearer and nearer to the Boer lines, the best marksmen in the garrison were incessantly on the lookout to pick off any of the besiegers who might rashly venture within range. Thus February and March passed, and though during April two assaults were made, the besiegers showed little energy or determination, and were repulsed with comparative ease. Still, however, provisions became scarcer. But Baden-Powell and his companions remained steadfast in their resolution to "sit tight;" and though a message sent out in May declared that they were "Very cheerful, very dry, and very hungry," no idea of surrender was entertained.

In the meantime help was on the way, for though Colonel Plumer and his volunteers had been foiled in every attempt to reach Mafeking from the north, better success attended the efforts of a flying column under the command of Brigadier-General Mahon, who left Kimberley early in May. Every precaution was taken to conceal its object; but somehow the news leaked out to the Boers, and on the twelfth of May Commandant Eloff determined to capture the town.

"The attack," says *The Daily News* correspondent, "was carefully planned, Eloff and a number of his men wading along the Molopo River, and succeeding in effecting an entrance into the native portion of the town. It was at four o'clock in the morning that the garrison first received the alarm, but it was not till nearly an hour later that it was realized that some-

thing more than the customary abortive attack was on foot. Then the fact that part of the native town was seen to be in flames brought home the unwelcome conviction that the enemy had succeeded in getting inside the outer ring of forts, and, having driven in the pickets, had set fire to the native portion of the town. About three hundred Boers got in in this way before the pickets rallied and closed them in, subsequently joining the men under Major Godley and those in two of the forts in checking the advance of the main body of the enemy. The natives, too, after recovering from their first surprise, also rallied and assumed the defensive. Commandant Eloff, with the advance guard, led the way to one of the old forts of the Chartered Company's Police, which, together with the adjoining barracks of the Protectorate Regiment, was under the command of Colonel Hore. As he went, he was heard to shout, 'Come on, men; to-day we take Mafeking!'

"It indeed looked at the time as if his words might be verified. Eloff and his men were upon Colonel Hore before there was time for the latter to carry out the order from headquarters to retire upon the town if possible. Before daylight the Boers had gained possession of the old fort, and had Colonel Hore and his men prisoners. They were clearly highly elated with their success, for one of them had the effrontery to ring up headquarters on the telephone, and to send a defiant message announcing that Colonel Hore was in their hands.

"Colonel Baden-Powell lost not an instant, but with admirable coolness issued order after order, which resulted within a few minutes in the formation of a

new line of defence and the advance of the enemy being checked. Some severe fighting was going on meanwhile in the native town, under the direction of Major Godley, the enemy being surrounded in a cattle kraal by Captain Marsh and Captain Fitzclarence, while Lord Charles Bentinck had hemmed in others on a sheltering kopje, and Commandant Eloff, in the old fort, was cut off from all communication with those of his men who were still in the native town. Those in the cattle kraal had been offered an opportunity to surrender, but this they refused to consider, and then guns and men were pushed gradually closer round them.

“Eloff, who had Colonel Hore a prisoner in the fort, did not for long realize that he was himself imprisoned, not knowing that the Boer main body had been beaten back, and hoping, no doubt, that Commandant Snyman would have successfully backed up his attack. Shortly after midday those in the cattle kraal surrendered, and were sent into the town; and during the afternoon those who had taken refuge on the kopje were shelled from their cover, and forced to retire in confusion among the native huts. It had been dark for about two hours before Commandant Eloff, having fully realized his position, surrendered to Colonel Hore, who had been his own prisoner during the whole day. It may be doubted whether Eloff would have given in even then, had not between seventy and eighty of his men deserted him, refusing to remain in the fort any longer. As they stole off, Eloff ordered the men who remained with him to fire upon them, and this order had been promptly obeyed. Then he surrendered unconditionally to Colonel Hore, and was taken up to

Colonel Baden-Powell's quarters. The meeting was a singular one—not the least like the meeting of enemies after a deadly conflict. Captain Singleton introduced Eloff, and 'B.-P.,' incapable of malice even towards a foe, said in his kindest and most courteous manner: 'Good evening, commandant; won't you come in and have some dinner?'

"Three days after the assault that failed, General Mahon effected a junction with Colonel Plumer at a spot about twenty miles to the west of Mafeking. Both forces came in contact with the Boers near the Molopo River, and a sharp fight ensued, in which, though the Boers fought stubbornly, the British were eventually victorious. Foot by foot they drove the Boers from the river, then some farmhouses in the neighbourhood were cleared, and finally the discomfited burghers were compelled to retire to the trenches eastward of Mafeking. Practically the way now lay open, and on the evening of the sixteenth of May Major Karri Davis, with an advance guard of Imperial Light Horse, at last entered the town. The main body of the relief force arrived early on the following morning; and thus, after many days, Mafeking was relieved. The besiegers were, however, not yet driven from their positions, and shortly after the arrival of the column a five-pounder opened fire on the town. It was, so to speak, the expiring flicker of the bombardment, for a few hours later the troops turned out, dashed at the laager, and put the last stragglers of the besieging force to flight."

CHAPTER XXXI.

TO PRETORIA—AND AFTERWARDS.

THE capture of General Cronje and his force and the arrival of the British at Bloemfontein, though they marked an epoch in the war, did not by any means bring it to a close, and skirmishes frequently occurred in the neighbourhood of Bloemfontein. On the thirty-first of March, when a small force commanded by Colonel Broadwood was marching up from Thabanchu, an ambush was formed at Koorn Spruit, where, as Lord Roberts wrote in his dispatch, "some two miles from the waterworks the road crosses a deep nullah or spruit, in which, during the night, a force of Boers had concealed themselves. So well were they hidden that our leading scouts passed over the drift without discovering them, and it was not until the wagons and guns were entering the drift that the Boers showed themselves and opened fire. Many of the drivers and artillery horses were at once shot down at short range, and several of the guns were captured; the remainder galloped away, covered by Roberts' Horse, which suffered heavily."

Three days later, another mishap befell the British at Reddersburg. A party of Irish Rifles and some Mounted Infantry, who were returning to Bethany

from the east of the Free State, whither they had been sent on a pacific errand, were surrounded by a much stronger force of Boers. Every way of escape was barred, and the troops had only rifles with which to reply to their opponents' guns. The fire grew hotter and hotter; but in the hope that assistance might arrive, the men stubbornly held out fighting with the courage born of despair. Night came on, but still the fire continued; and though by 2 a.m. the British had expended their last cartridge, they were still unwilling to surrender, and waited grimly for the help that did not come. But when at daybreak the fire became fiercer, they saw that further resistance to the inevitable was useless, and nearly five hundred men unwillingly surrendered.

Boer commandos were at work in many parts of the Free State. Some of them pushed forward to the borders of Cape Colony, and heavy fighting took place in the neighbourhood of Wepener, where a British camp was besieged. Lord Roberts, however, decided to try what conciliatory measures would effect, and all Free Staters who gave up their arms were allowed to go in peace to their homes. The plan, unfortunately, did not meet with the success it deserved, and in many cases men who had surrendered were compelled to take up arms again.

On the twenty-fifth of April a telegram from Lord Roberts announced that the Boers, influenced doubtless by the approach of Generals Brabant and Hart, had raised the siege of Wepener and retired towards Ladybrand. Dewetsdorp was occupied on the same day by General Chermiside, and about this time the force at Bloemfontein was augmented by the arrival

of a battalion of City Imperial Volunteers and a company of Imperial Yeomanry. The Boers were still in some force in the neighbourhood of Thabanchu. They occupied an almost impregnable position, and as day after day desultory fighting continued, some small successes rewarded their efforts. But the tide of war was now setting steadily in the direction of the British, and though ultimate victory still lay far ahead, it became clearer and clearer that might must in the end prevail.

By the end of April matters were ripe for a further advance, and on the last day of the month the forward movement began. The situation had by this time become extremely complicated; it was not a question of a simple advance in one direction, for the whole Boer nation was in arms, and commandos were scattered here, there, and everywhere. The main advance, however, was now on Pretoria, and on the third of May Lord Roberts entered Brandfort. Here the Boers had apparently intended to make a vigorous resistance, but Lord Roberts' movements were so rapid and unexpected that their plans were foiled, and when his troops suddenly appeared on all sides of the town at once, they met with little opposition. The Boer artillery, indeed, attempted to open fire; but the surprise was too complete for any effective stand to be made, and the Boers were soon in rapid retreat. At the Vet River, however, the retreating force recovered itself; and General Hutton, who commanded the Mounted Infantry, fought a sharp engagement before the stream could be crossed.

Meanwhile, in the west, General Hunter and General Barton crossed the Vaal near Windsorton; and that place and Klipdam were evacuated by the Boers, who

trekked to the northward, still fighting vigorously. Thabanchu, however, was still occupied by the Free Staters; and on Friday, the fourth of May, General Rundle engaged them, compelled them to retreat, occupied the vacated positions, and pursued the retiring Boers for about seven miles. But the hill country around Thabanchu was not easy to clear, and when ousted from one locality, the burghers easily took up positions elsewhere.

Lord Roberts still pressed steadily forward. On the tenth of May he reached the Zand River, where the Boers, posted on the northern bank, offered a vigorous resistance; but it was successfully overcome, and Lord Roberts wired that evening, "We have had a successful day, and are eight miles north of the river." Two days later he entered Kroonstad without opposition.

This was an important event; for since the British occupation of Bloemfontein, Kroonstad had been regarded as the capital of the Free State. On Lord Roberts' arrival, however, Mr. Steyn promptly retired to Lindley, which was declared to be the new seat of government. Before his departure he exhorted the burghers to continue the war. But a succession of reverses had quite disheartened them. Dissensions appeared; and while many of the Free Staters returned to their homes, others, to the number of about a thousand, surrendered to Lord Roberts. The Transvaalers started for their own country, accompanied by their two leaders, Botha and De Wet. At Kroonstad a halt was made to allow the transport to come up.

Sir Redvers Buller, in the meantime, was again on the move; and on Thursday, the tenth of May, he marched to Helpmakaar, whence he contemplated

attacking the Boer positions on the Biggarsberg. The assault was most successful. As the 3rd Cavalry Brigade crowned the hills on both sides of the main road the opposing forces abandoned their entrenched positions, and the summit was gained with the loss of only a few men injured. That evening Lord Dundonald reported that he had driven the Boer rearguard back on the main body at Zuralinden, and later in the night Helpmakaar Nek was abandoned. The road to Dundee was thus thrown open, and on the fifteenth of May the village was once more occupied by British troops. All the houses had been looted, and many were damaged, while in some of the collieries the machinery was found to be destroyed.

On Monday, the twenty-first of May, the advance of the main column continued, and on the twenty-seventh of May Lord Roberts crossed the Vaal at Viljoen's Drift. The next day, General Pretzman, who was left in command at Bloemfontein, read a proclamation from Lord Roberts, to the effect that the Orange Free State, having been conquered by her Majesty's forces, was annexed to the British Empire, and would thenceforth be known as the Orange River Colony.

From the Vaal Lord Roberts advanced to Johannesburg. On the thirtieth of May the Mounted Infantry, under Colonel Henry, engaged the Boers, and drove them from a position near Natal Junction, and then pushed forward to Elandsfontein, a suburb of the gold-reef city, where he arrived shortly after a couple of trains had started for Pretoria with a number of railway officials, guns, and telegraph instruments. A third train, conveying burghers, made an effort to escape, and

had the driver not lost heart, might probably have succeeded in the attempt. At the critical moment, however, he backed; the burghers sprang from their seats, and under a brisk fire from the troops many of them dashed up the line and took shelter behind a heap of rubbish from the mines.

Others rejoined their companions in the town, and the fight, commenced at the station, extended into the streets. Some of the inhabitants, on the other hand, gave a kindly welcome to the soldiers: tea was offered for their acceptance, and the Tommies divided their attention between partaking of refreshments and firing at the armed Boers who now and then appeared. A party of volunteers, in the meanwhile, blocked the railway line; and the burghers, precluded from obtaining reinforcements, retired from Elandsfontein and other suburbs. Johannesburg itself was still occupied, but information was received that the Boers were trekking from the town, and seemed to be retiring northwards.

On the first of June Lord Roberts wired: "The occupation of Johannesburg passed off quite satisfactorily to-day—thanks to the excellent arrangements made by Dr. Krause, the Transvaal commandant here—and order prevailed throughout the town."

Meanwhile, the annexation of the Free State had not tended to pacify the burghers, and active resistance still continued. An entrenched camp was formed on a hill twelve miles north-east of Senekal, guns were posted, and the burghers prepared for a further struggle, which ensued on the twenty-ninth of May, when General Rundle attacked the position. A heavy preliminary shell-fire produced no response, and the

burghers lay low until the British had worked round three sides of the hill ; then they brought forward a gun, and under the thundering roar of artillery the fight began. All day the conflict raged ; but though the Grenadiers, who led the attack, fought gallantly and lost heavily, they were unable to make any impression. When evening drew on they were compelled to retire, and the Boers, who had also suffered severely, remained masters of the situation, though their leader, Commandant De Villiers, was wounded.

An unfortunate incident of the battle was the accidental firing of the dry grass on the veldt. Not only did the khaki uniforms show up with vivid clearness against the blackened surface, but many of the helpless wounded were only rescued from the flames by the unselfish heroism of their comrades.

The attack, though not a complete success, in some degree answered its purpose. It compelled the Boers to concentrate for the defence of their camp, and withdrew them from the neighbourhood of Lindley and Bethlehem, where they had been menacing a small British force. The threatened troops were thus enabled to escape, though their safety was purchased at a serious cost to the Grenadiers.

Lord Roberts, in the meantime, was steadily advancing on Pretoria. His approach spread panic in the town. Prior even to his arrival at Johannesburg a special train stood ready in Pretoria station to carry the President and other members of the government from the threatened capital ; the forts were prepared for defence, and the greatest excitement prevailed. By the twenty-ninth of May, notwithstanding the warlike preparations at the forts, the general panic had considerably

increased. To the disheartened Boers the advancing army seemed an overwhelming host, and the idea of resisting Lord Roberts' entry was abandoned. A final meeting of the Executive was held, and everything was put in train for the departure of the officials on the following day. The plan was carried into effect; and on the thirtieth of May President Kruger and his party left Pretoria for Machadodorp, taking with them £3,500,000 worth of gold.

News of Lord Roberts' approach was not long in reaching the British prisoners at Waterval. Hopes of release stirred them up to wild excitement; and as it was found necessary to withdraw many of the guards, it was feared that a general outbreak would occur. In this dilemma the Transvaal government requested twenty British officers to go to keep order; and the commission, once accepted, was loyally carried out.

Meanwhile, Mounted Infantry patrols were advancing from various quarters: Baden-Powell was reported to be at Rustenburg Road; French was fifteen miles from the capital; and British scouts were said to have reached Bronkhorst Spruit.

Lord Roberts also was steadily pressing forward. On the morning of the fourth of June his force made an early start, and after a march of ten miles came in contact with the Boers, who were holding both banks of a stream called the Six Miles Spruit. That evening he wired the day's events to the Secretary of State for War: "Henry's and Ross's Mounted Infantry, with the West Somerset, Dorset, Bedford, and Sussex companies of Yeomanry, quickly dislodged them from the south bank, and pursued them for nearly a mile, when

they found themselves under a heavy fire from guns which the Boers had placed in a well-concealed and commanding position. Our heavy guns, which had been purposely placed in the front part of the column, were hurried on to the assistance of the Mounted Infantry as fast as the oxen and mules could travel over the great rolling hills by which Pretoria is surrounded. The guns were supported by Stephenson's Brigade of Pole-Carew's Division, and after a few rounds drove the enemy out of their positions. The Boers then attempted to turn our left flank. In this they were again foiled by the Mounted Infantry and Yeomanry, supported by Maxwell's Brigade of Tucker's Division. As, however, they still kept pressing to our left rear, I sent word to Ian Hamilton, who was advancing three miles to our left, to incline towards us, and fill up the gap between the two columns. This finally checked the enemy, who were driven back towards Pretoria."

Pretoria, however, was not yet occupied; and that night the victorious troops, having driven the Boers from nearly all their positions, bivouacked outside the town. "Shortly before midnight," continued Lord Roberts, "I was awake by two officials of the South African Republic and a general officer of the Boer army, who brought me a letter from Botha, proposing an armistice for the purpose of settling terms of surrender. I replied that I would gladly meet the commandant-general the next morning, but that I was not prepared to discuss any terms, as the surrender of the town must be unconditional. I asked for a reply by daybreak, as I had ordered the troops to march on the town as soon as it was light. In his reply Botha told

me that he had decided not to defend Pretoria, and that he trusted the women, children, and property would be protected. At 1 a.m. to-day, while on the line of march, I was met by three of the principal officials with flags of truce, stating their wish to surrender the town."

The British occupation of Pretoria, which was thus easily accomplished, had its picturesque side. Crowds of excited people, animated by various emotions, flocked to meet the troops, and not least among them were a number of captured officers, who had recovered their freedom by a bold stroke.

Shortly after midnight they were awakened by the commandant of the Boer prison guard, and desired to make preparations for an immediate departure. But they declined to do anything of the kind, and springing on the commandant they promptly disarmed him. His adjutant shortly afterwards shared his fate. Thus, prisoners and jailers having summarily changed places, the officers were among the first to greet the troops on their arrival.

The occupation of the town was far from putting an end to the war. The struggle, however, entered a new phase; for now, with the British in possession of the capital, and the President a fugitive, the Boer cause had become a forlorn hope. A telegram from the Executive, however, declared that "the government and people are united in their determination to continue the war in the Lydenburg district as long as life remains in them." Hope of final victory must indeed have been at an end, but the condition of guerilla warfare now inaugurated kept the troops busy for months. Many engagements were fought in different parts of

the country ; and though fortune occasionally favoured the Boers, who gained several minor successes, the "fickle dame" was, on the whole, faithful to the British.

Week after week passed in marches, counter-marches, and fights, while every day brought the inevitable conclusion nearer. Again and again General Christian De Wet eluded his pursuers ; and President Kruger, who, as time went on, took up his quarters permanently in the railway saloon which was declared to be the "capital," also managed to avoid capture. The British, however, steadily worked their way farther and farther afield. Place after place was captured and occupied ; but though many of the Boers laid down their arms, others still fought doggedly. A well-laid plot to secure the capture of Lord Roberts and the death of his principal officers at Pretoria was discovered just in time to avert the danger. The plotters were captured, and the ringleader, after being tried and convicted, was executed.

On the first of September Lord Roberts issued a proclamation to the effect that the Transvaal became, from that day forward, part of her Majesty's dominions. The announcement of the annexation was speedily followed by the withdrawal of President Kruger, who, on the evening of Tuesday, the eleventh of September, arrived at Lorenzo Marques, on his way to Europe.

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